

Copyright
by
Liana Stela Hervas
2012

The Thesis Committee for Liana Stela Hervas
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

**Politicizing Food in Quito: Food Sovereignty and the Canasta
Comunitaria Ciudad Viva**

APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:

Supervisor:

Henry Dietz

Bjorn Sletto

**Politicizing Food in Quito: Food Sovereignty and the Canasta
Comunitaria Ciudad Viva**

by

Liana Stela Hervas, BA

Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Austin
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Arts

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2012

Dedication

To Mayna, who jumped on trampolines.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Henry Dietz and Bjorn Sletto for their mentorship. Professor Dietz graciously agreed to supervise this thesis in my last semester and guided my writing process with patience and cheer. Bjorn saw me through the whole process and helped me prepare for summer research. Additionally, I would like to thank Reinaldo Román, a professor and friend from my undergraduate study at the University of Georgia who helped me begin to find my voice in this project.

My time in Austin has been full of dear friends. Sharing seminars and life with my classmates at LLILAS has made these two years an amazing experience. El proceso se ha enriquecido mucho con la amistad y apoyo constante de Lucia Aramayo. Le agradezco también a Jacinto Cuvi por ser un buen amigo en Austin y en Quito.

The research and writing process would not have been as enjoyable without the love, advice and support of Kathy McCaston and Michael Young. I also want to thank Mariela Rodríguez for Sunday night phone calls, Bill King for visiting me in Quito, and my cousin Melissa for being my pen pal.

Con mucho amor les agradezco a mi familia y amigos en Quito, en especial a mi prima Daniela, mi tía Sthela, y mi prima Margarita; y a Diana Chávez and Ligia (Nua) Utitiaj y los brujiis por su amistad. No hubiera disfrutado tanto del tiempo de investigación sin ellos.

I must thank my interviewees in Quito who shared their time and thoughts. Their kindness and passion made this project fun and meaningful.

And finally, I want to thank my Mom and Pops whom I love very much.

Abstract

Politicizing Food in Quito: Food Sovereignty and the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva

Liana Stela Hervas, MA

The University of Texas at Austin, 2012

Supervisor: Henry Dietz

Food sovereignty is a multi-faceted proposal for the politicization of the agro-food sector. Advocated by the international farmers' movement, Vía Campesina, food sovereignty recognizes the importance of consumption while it focuses on production. By looking at the implementation of the food sovereignty proposal in Ecuador in the 2008 Constitution and on the legal level, the organizational level, and the level of individual consumers, I suggest approaches to consumers and consumption within the food sovereignty framework. In addition to discussing the ambiguity of the State's position on food sovereignty, I show that social organizations working on food sovereignty tend to see consumers as self-centered, solely motivated by individual concerns about price and health, meaning that they are not seen as critical actors in the agro-food system. By focusing on members of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, a collective food purchase model in south Quito, I show that while consumers reproduce individualized logics that privilege health and savings, they also mobilize alternative, relational logics that should be the base for consumer-based articulation within the food sovereignty

framework. These conclusions support the significance of seeing consumers as political actors as well as the importance of valuing the daily practices of urban inhabitants as the bases for the further politicization of consumption.

La soberanía alimentaria es una propuesta multidimensional para la politización del sector agroalimentario. Desde la concepción de Vía Campesina, un movimiento internacional de agricultores, soberanía alimentaria reconoce la importancia del consumo, centrándose en la producción. A partir de analizar la aplicación de la propuesta de soberanía alimentaria en la Constitución de 2008, en el plano jurídico, en el trabajo de organizaciones sociales y al nivel de consumidores individuales en Quito, Ecuador, propongo una aproximación a los roles del consumo y los consumidores, en el marco de soberanía alimentaria. A la vez de indagar en la ambigüedad de la posición estatal frente al tema de soberanía alimentaria, muestro que la tendencia de las organizaciones sociales que trabajan el tema de soberanía alimentaria es ver a los consumidores como actores poco involucrados, centrados en sus beneficios particulares entorno a precios y salud, lo que significa que los consumidores no son percibidos como actores en si mismo. Al enfocarme en los miembros de la Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, un modelo de compra colectiva de alimentos en el sur de Quito, muestro que mientras los consumidores reproducen lógicas individuales de ahorro y de salud, también movilizan lógicas alternativas basadas en relaciones sociales y afectivas. Propongo que estas lógicas, presentes en los consumidores, deberían formar parte de las bases para una mayor inclusión y articulación de consumidores en el marco de soberanía alimentaria. A partir de este análisis se muestra la importancia de mirar a los consumidores como actores políticos y valorar las prácticas cotidianas de los habitantes urbanos como cimientos para la mayor politización del consumo.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Concepts and Methods	7
Food Sovereignty	7
Food and Daily Practices	15
Consumerist Politics Vs. the Politicization of Consumption	17
Methodology	23
Chapter 3: Food Sovereignty in Ecuador	27
Historical and Political Context: 2006 to the Present	27
Food Sovereignty in Ecuador's Constitutional and Legal framework	34
2008 Constitution	34
Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria	36
Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2009-2013	40
Implementation of Ecuador's Food Sovereignty Framework	44
Perceptions of consumers and food sovereignty in Ecuador	49
Approaches to the implementation of food sovereignty	54
Chapter 4: Politicizing Food in Quito: the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva.....	62
Alternative Food Options in Quito	62
Canastas Comunitarias in Ecuador	65
The Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva	68
Alternative Visions of Food in the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva	75
Membership Characteristics	76
Economic and Social Value of the Canasta	80
Appreciation of Producers and the Campo	80

Organizational Autonomy, Dialogue and Transparency	87
Knowledge and Appreciation of Food Sovereignty and Solidarity Economy	88
Conclusions: Politicizing Food.....	91
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions	93
Appendix A: Acronyms	100
Appendix B: Interview Guides	101
Appendix C: Interview List	104
Appendix D: Canasta Members' Reported Household Earnings and Food Expenses	105
Appendix E: Calculations of Savings	106
References	108

List of Tables

Table 1: Organizational Approaches to Food Sovereignty	48
Table 2: Age Distribution of Interviewed Canasta Members	77
Table 3: Combinations of Food Acquisition Options by Canasta Members	79

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Map of Mercado Mayorista and Casa Barrial of the Barrio General	
	Rumiñahui	73

Chapter 1: Introduction

When my Tia Esthelita sends me to buy bread for breakfast, I know she means for me to climb the hill to La Espiga in the neighborhood roundabout. When she sends me to buy vegetables for lunch, I know to go to the small *verdurería* (vegetable shop) in front of the bus stop. We buy fruit from the *casera* (favorite vendor) who sits surrounded by produce on the sidewalk in front of the church, and fresh cheese comes from the around-the-corner neighbor on Mondays and Tuesdays. These are the facts of our everyday eating. They are relationships sustained by time and by an un-stated commitment between vendor and purchaser. These relationships maintain the neighborhood *panadería* (bread shop), the *verdurería* and the *casera*, who in turn maintain the wellbeing of the neighborhood, not only in their provision of foodstuffs, but in their combined role as community space.

Urban food acquisition and consumption are crisscrossed with relationships: household relationships, relationships with vendors, intermediaries, and producers, with other consumers, and with national and international policies and corporations. These relationships, public and private, are not strictly economic in nature. And they are often taken for granted until they begin to change and this change becomes tangible in the daily lives of urban residents. In Quito, these changes are obvious in the increasing number of grocery stores chains, the rising frequency of obesity in adults and children, and the growing popularity of restaurants and fast food for *almuerzo* (lunch), the biggest meal of the day. For many, these changes in consumption and dietary patterns are worrying in and of themselves; for others, these changes are disturbing because of what they mean for producers or for the environment. My thesis shows the importance of viewing the agro-food system as a complex whole that depends on consumers and producers and calls into

question the kinds of market structures that we create and reinforce as members of a society.

In Ecuador, as criticisms of the current structure of the agro-food system have increased, food sovereignty-- the idea that market structures be rebuilt around local relationships and not transnational market interests-- has gained support not only among grassroots indigenous and farmer movements, but also among urban movements and in public policy. By using the example of the Canasta¹ Comunitaria Ciudad Viva in Quito, my thesis examines the role of the average urban consumer in the articulation of the food sovereignty movement in Ecuador.

Through my exploration, I show that urban consumers are not only motivated by self-centered concerns with savings and health, but also by social concerns. The mobilization and reproduction of socially-driven motivations represent alternative conceptualizations of consumption, which in turn present an important space for the advancement of the food sovereignty proposal. I outline the complexity of the food sovereignty proposal and undertake an evaluation of consumer practices as political actions in their own right, in order to present the Canasta experience as a valuable consumer-based space that simultaneously reproduces limiting individualized approaches to food purchase as well as the kinds of alternatives at the core of food sovereignty.

My research project arose out of a long-standing interest in food and its value as a symbolic space to think about the ways that identity and relationships form around shopping, cooking and eating together, as well as the relationships between the city and the countryside and between policy and practice. More specifically, my research comes from a desire to identify the necessary elements for the creation of a more just agro-food

¹ When referring to the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, I will either use its full name, or simply call it the Canasta. This is to differentiate from discussion about the 'canasta model' in Ecuador, and from the 'canastas,' the produce basket, which are distributed to members.

system that moves beyond the privileged spaces of the wealthy and reclaims a vision of food as a valuable element in the reproduction of social life and politics rather than a commodity to be exchanged on the market. These broad interests have remained at the core of the research process despite multiple changes.

My project is structured around three general objectives. The first objective was to explore the alternative forms of food distribution and marketing to which consumers in Quito have access. This objective led to an interest in the canasta experience and to the second research objective, which was to understand the perceptions Canasta members have of their participation in the Canasta as an alternative model of food purchase. Finally, the third objective was to outline the lessons offered by the canasta experience about how to think through the political function of food purchase and consumption within the framework of food sovereignty.

My research was conducted in two phases between mid-June and mid-July 2011 in Quito, Ecuador. The first phase consisted of interviews with twelve organizations, ranging from a pseudo-state institution to local research institutes that all work on food sovereignty. Additionally, I was able to participate in the first two meetings of the Consumer Commission of the Conferencia Plurinacional e Intercultural de Soberanía Alimentaria, where the attending members strategized about a national campaign for consumer articulation around food sovereignty. The results of this phase of the research are discussed in depth in Chapter Three.

Throughout the interviews with organizations it became clear that the space opened by the government's discourse of food sovereignty is simultaneously criticized and valued. These interviews also show that interpretations of food sovereignty at the organizational level are varied. In many cases, organizations approach food sovereignty, and the consumer's role, by focusing on one isolated element of the broader vision. While

many of these organizations maintain interesting positions in relationship to the agro-food system in Ecuador, their focus on a single element of the food sovereignty proposal tends to limit the political elements of the proposal.

These interviews also highlighted a perception that consumers are simplistic and self-centered: they consider little more than price and personal health when making purchasing decisions. According to this vision, the lack of consumer articulation around food sovereignty is because consumers either do not know any better or they do not care. This vision devalues any possibility that consumers already draw on alternative, relational purchasing logics.

The second phase of my research was carried out with the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva in south Quito. The canasta experience is an Ecuadorian model for collective purchase of everyday produce. Throughout the cities of Ecuador, families come together on a bi-weekly or monthly basis to buy fifteen to twenty agricultural products, either directly from producers or from intermediaries. This model of group purchase reduces cost, guarantees produce, and creates a meaningful social space for members. My interest in the canasta experience began with the constant mention of Canastas as *the* example of consumer involvement in thinking about the agro-food system within the framework of food sovereignty. The Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva was of particular interest because it was the first and is therefore the longest operating Canasta in Quito. I conducted thirteen interviews with Canasta members and five interviews with neighborhood residents who do not participate in order to better understand perceptions of the Canasta and the food system.

Canasta members, in my interviews with them, highlighted individual concerns, like price and health, as well as alternative approaches to food purchase. By locating the canasta experience within the broader framework of food sovereignty and by viewing

Canasta members as average urban consumers who show some level of reflection around consumption in their decision to participate in the Canasta, it becomes evident that the Canasta represents a space that reproduces individualized understandings of purchase and consumption as well as alternative visions based on relationships and community. Furthermore, the Canasta interviews show how the discourse used by the Correa administration reaches the urban consumer and how it is perceived.

Through my discussion of food sovereignty legally and at the organizational level, and of the Canasta as an example of specific consumer practices, I show the difficulties and importance of operationalizing a comprehensive vision of food sovereignty. I also highlight the value of recognizing already existing consumer motivations that move beyond individualized approaches to consumption. Throughout the thesis I draw attention to the discrepancies between the experience of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva and the general understanding of the canasta model. I do this, not to discredit the model, but rather to allow for a more rigorous understanding of this Canasta's potential as a site of politicized consumption. The Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva is a space in which individualized approaches to food purchase are evident alongside alternatives, making this Canasta a valuable space for continued activism.

Chapter Two introduces the conceptual framework that has guided me in this research, as well as the methodology used. I introduce food sovereignty, food and daily practices and the politics of consumption as a framework for the rest of my text. In Chapter Three, I outline the State's interpretation and inclusion of food sovereignty into its constitutional and policy framework through a discussion of Ecuador's 2008 Constitution, the Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria and the Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir. Subsequently I use the interviews conducted with organizations to discuss the complexities of this inclusion, the difficulties of operationalizing the food sovereignty

proposal, and a general perception of consumers as simplistic and self-centered. Chapter Four focuses on the interviews with Canasta members and non-members. After a brief introduction to Quito, I present the Canasta as a space in which consumers simultaneously maintain the kinds of relationship-based principles that are central to food sovereignty and reproduce mainstream, individualized interpretations of food purchase and well-being. In Chapter Five, I pull these strands together to discuss what my research shows about consumers and consumption and their role in food sovereignty. Throughout the text, quotations appear in Spanish and English, depending on the language in which I encountered them in the texts I used.

Chapter 2: Concepts and Methods

This chapter presents the conceptual approaches that give form to the analysis that follows. I begin by presenting food sovereignty as a proposal born out of the international farmer's movement, Vía Campesina. After a discussion of the importance of solidarity, rights discourse and democratic practice to the food sovereignty proposal, I conclude this section by briefly touching on food sovereignty as a proposal that questions modernity and offers alternatives. Then I discuss food and daily practices as layered, symbolic and active sites of social reproduction. Before the final section on methodology, I introduce alternative food consumption as an important political space when it represents a politicization of consumption and not just consumerist politics.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Food sovereignty is a political proposal that questions neoliberal logic by proposing a politicized reformulation of the agro-food system across scales (international, national, local), based on a commitment to solidarity, transgressive rights discourse and democratic processes as well as an understanding of the social and cultural value of land, agricultural production and food. The demands that would later be formalized as food sovereignty by Vía Campesina, widely recognized as one of the largest international farmers' movements (Vía Campesina, 2011a; Patel, 2007; McMichael, 2009), have deep historical roots that "are entwined with the history of agriculture, land reform, and social movements throughout the ages" (Vía Campesina 2011b; Flores, CLOC representative, personal communication, 11 August, 2011). In the discussion that follows I draw on the work of various authors as well as Vía Campesina documents in order to portray food sovereignty as a paradigm shift away from dominant visions of the agro-food sector.

Drawing on a diverse history of farmer organizing, Vía Campesina was founded in 1993; three years later it introduced the food sovereignty proposal to the international community. I discuss the definition of the term later in this section, but first I outline the global context in which the food sovereignty proposal was solidified. In broad strokes, the proposal arose in resistance to the liberalization of agriculture through international trade policy at the expense of small-scale farmers and the 1995 creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Desmaris, 2007; Patel, 2005; McMichael, 2005; Vía Campesina, 2000).

The interconnectedness of the neoliberalization of agriculture, the development project and the current ‘corporate food regime’² further contextualize the food sovereignty proposal (McMichael 2005, 2009). According to McMichael (2009), the corporate food regime is rooted in the mercantilist food regime, which lasted from the 1940s to the 1970s. In the post war era the combined implementation of structural adjustments, the Green Revolution, and US food aid (dumping), resulted in the weakening of agriculture in the Global South and the beginnings of international agribusiness (McMichael, 2009, p. 291-293; McMichael, 2005). Dumping resulted in falsely cheap foodstuffs in the South and the early stages of global food sourcing. In addition to undermining peasant agricultures, global food sourcing also became a “vehicle of hegemony as it built food dependency, dietary emulation and a global consumer culture across the world” (McMichael, 2009, p. 293).

The corporate food regime solidified the tendencies that began in the post war era, but differs from past regimes through its intimate relationship with neoliberal politics

² McMichael (2005) uses food regimes to show “the instrumental role of food in securing global hegemony” because they “constitute broader relations in the political history of capital. They express, simultaneously, forms of geo-political ordering and, related, forms of accumulation, and they are vectors of power” (p. 276).

(McMichael, 2005, p. 277). The corporate food regime uses privatization, liberalization, and de-regulation of agricultural sectors world-wide in order to promote a global, capital-driven food industry that envisions agriculture “as a source of cheap market inputs for a mythical global consumer society” (McMichael, 2009, p. 299; McMichael, 2005, p. 270-71). This results in greater emphasis on agricultural exports, the rampant vulnerabilization of labor, and a general commodification of agriculture and food (McMichael, 2005, 270-71). The corporate food regime does not only commodify and industrialize agricultural production and food, it also “generates redundant populations and destabilizes social and ecological relationships” (McMichael 2009, 300).

This model opens national markets to international trade at their own expense.³ The submission of local and national interests to those of transnational capital fosters dependence and leads to a loss of economic sovereignty as well as local/national ability to make independent decisions and define policy. The model proposed by the corporate food regime has often been imposed on States through development projects, highlighting the connections between this food regime, development and neoliberalism.

For McMichael (2005) the development project and the corporate food regime share the end goal of creating globalized world agriculture and consumption patterns. Many critics of rural development, and development more generally (Patel 2005; Latouche, 2007; Bretón solo de Zalvídar, 2004, 2009a), suggest that the development project reinforces neoliberal politics, not only by reducing the state and naturalizing the market, but by actively promoting the “modernization” of local agriculture through mechanisms like specialization, biotechnology, and deregulation, in an effort to connect local agricultures to the globalized agricultural system. From this perspective, rural

³ The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and its destruction, not only of Mexican peasant livelihoods, but also of the ability of Mexican consumers to buy Mexican agricultural crops is probably the most famous example of the risks of this kind of international trade.

modernization is measured not by its effects in rural areas but by its capacity to meet the demands of the globalized urban consumer (Patel, 2005, p. 89), which explains the paradox of modern agriculture: the simultaneous increase in hunger and rural poverty and the proliferation of cheap urban food (Patel, 2005, p. 88 & 101; Latouche, 2007; Bretón solo de Zalvídár, 2009b).

I would like to highlight two points here. First of all, the ‘underdevelopment’ of the ‘Third World’ is vital to the ‘development’ of the first world; this relationship is obvious in the corporate food regime because food reflects the historical injustice of political, economic and social relationships. McMichael (2005) explains:

The current political conjuncture is the culmination of a long-term imperial trajectory – not simply the conversion of the non-European world to export monocultures, but also the power relations consigning the peoples of the colonized hinterlands to an unseen, racialized underconsumption that has become the condition for metropolitan development and overconsumption (p. 278).

Secondly, the relationship between development and underdevelopment is manifested in the promotion of urban development at the expense of rural underdevelopment (McMichael, 2005; Patel, 2005). Inherent in this construction is a vision of the peasantry as a relic of the past and an impediment to modernity and progress, meaning that the end of the peasantry becomes a sign of successful modernization (McMichael, 2005, Desmaris, 2007).

The processes of rural dispossession produced by this devaluation of rural life are “not simply the realization of the development narrative... but the displacement of biodiversity, customary forms of knowledge and moral economy” (McMichael 2005, p. 280). In the face of the liberalization of agriculture, growing rural poverty, and the loss of indigenous and farmer cultural elements, food sovereignty embodies an alternative vision. The food sovereignty proposal demands localized agro-food systems centered on small scale farmers’ rights, knowledges and visions of the future. This proposal builds an

understanding that the wellbeing of small famers is intimately tied to the long-term wellbeing of humanity (Vía Campesina, 2011a) and that conversely, “liberalization of agriculture is a war on peasants that decimates rural communities and destroys farming families” (Vía Campesina, 2006).

The first formal definition of food sovereignty came from Vía Campesina at the World Food Summit organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome, Italy in 1996. It described food sovereignty as “the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity. We have the right to produce our own food in our own territory. Food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security⁴” (Vía Campesina, 1996). In 2001, this definition was reformulated for greater inclusion and clarity:

We define food sovereignty as the peoples’ right to define their own policies and strategies for the sustainable production, distribution and consumption of food that guarantee the right to food for the entire population, on the basis of small and medium-sized production, respecting their own cultures and the diversity of peasant, fishing and indigenous forms of agricultural production, marketing and management of rural areas, in which women play a fundamental role (Vía Campesina, 2001a, p. 4).

Food sovereignty “works within the context, but against the dictates, of corporate globalization” (McMichael, 2009, p. 294), meaning that the proposal does not uncritically reject global and favor local. Rather “it redefines the global in terms appropriate to democratic conditions of food production and distribution” (McMichael, 2009, p. 294),

⁴ Food security proposes, as its end goal, enough healthy and varied food for everyone, without attention to where the food comes from, how it is produced, nor the policies and agricultural system behind the product (Carrasco and Tejada, 2008, p. 27). To use Patel’s phrasing, food security is ‘agnostic’ about the political and economic systems behind sufficient food for all (2005, p. 110; 2007, p. 90). In line with the development project, food security gives “tacit support for an export agricultural model of production and consumption” (Patel, 2005, p. 110). While food sovereignty is opposed to the notions of agricultural development and consumption implicit in food security, it is not opposed to food security. Rather “food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security” (Vía Campesina, 1996).

and proposes a mutually constitutive vision of the local and the global in which the local is shaped by the global and the global by the local. As I will discuss below, international farmer solidarity plays an important role in the mutual construction of the local and the global.

Similarly, food sovereignty is not opposed to international markets and trade on all accounts. Rather, it opposes markets that favor international capital accumulation, and favors markets established on the interests and demands of small farmers, their production traditions, knowledges, and visions of the future. In other words, “Food sovereignty does not negate trade, but rather, it promotes the formulation of trade policies and practices that serve the rights of peoples to safe, healthy and ecologically sustainable production” (Vía Campesina, 2001b).

So far I have presented the context that gave rise to the food sovereignty proposal, as well as the basic content of the proposal. Now I turn to food sovereignty’s approach to solidarity, rights, and democracy, as mechanisms through which the politicization of the agro-food system can be achieved. Solidarity among farmers and activists the world over is an important element of the Vía Campesina movement as well as the food sovereignty proposal. Patel (2005) argues that solidarity occurs when there is mutual recognition among actors, which allows them to move beyond reactionary politics and to formulate creative alternatives.

The food sovereignty proposal fosters mutual recognition among farmer groups internationally. Farmer solidarity (by which I mean individual identification with a collective) creates “a movement that is succeeding in globalizing local struggles while at the same time localizing global struggles” (Vía Campesina, 2006). Solidarity is an important tenant of the food sovereignty proposal because it brings farmers together not only to resist local processes of peasant dispossession, but also to propose alternatives.

This was echoed in a December 2011 interview with Alberto Gomez, a Vía Campesina activist, in which he comments that the success of the Vía Campesina is not only based on opposition to the WTO, but in the movement's ability to "propose alternatives" (Vía Campesina, 2011b). This dual work of resistance and proposal formulation among farmers allows for the interpretation of the local through the global, and vice versa.

Similarly to food sovereignty, solidary economy proposes an alternative to free market economics through the construction of markets and economic structures based on social and solidary relationships (Acosta, 2009b). While the food sovereignty proposal values solidarity I have not encountered explicit mention of solidary economy in the food sovereignty literature. As Chapters Three and Four will show, food sovereignty and solidary economy are tightly linked in the Constitutional, legal, organizational and consumer approaches to food sovereignty in Ecuador.

In addition to a politics of solidarity, food sovereignty couches itself in rights discourse. According to Patel (2005) the food sovereignty proposal uses dominant rights discourse transgressively by "using the language of rights to summon an active politics" that focuses on the people who hold rights, and not on the institutions that enforce them (p. 92-93). Conversely, dominant discourses of human rights depend on a passive public whose participation is orchestrated by institutions focusing on violations of human rights (p.92-93). By simultaneously giving rights to peoples, nations and state unions, food sovereignty proposes a political process based on contention:

ascribing rights to different scales of collectivity is to invite a series of conflicts...no one people, country or state union has a unique vision of food policy, and to suggest that these constituencies each have simultaneous and unalienable rights is to open the door to a great deal of contention over priority jurisdiction and authority (p. 112).

The food sovereignty proposal and Vía Campesina's framing of the proposal in a transgressive rights discourse "takes a calculated risk in the possibility of a permanent radical agrarian politics" and is "contingent on a faith in a radical democratic political imaginary in which even, especially, the deepest relations of power come to be contested publicly" (Patel, 2005, p. 113).

In this way, rights become a means to an end, and not an end in and of themselves (Patel, 2007, p. 91; McMichael, 2009, p. 304). The 'end' becomes the ongoing democratic processes required by the proposed "radical democratic political imaginary" (Patel, 2005, p. 113). This approach to democracy is pragmatic and theoretical. The mass engagement that it demands "is a practical solution to the varieties of state and sub-state problems in agriculture, where democratic political engagement around rights emerges as the most pragmatic mechanism for maintaining local level food security" (Patel, 2007, p. 91). The politics of solidarity, transgressive rights discourse and the proposal of democratic practice based on mass participation and contention are the tools through which the food sovereignty proposal politicizes food. As evidenced here, the food sovereignty proposal goes beyond providing small scale farmers access to the necessary means of production by "includ[ing a] re-envisioning [of] the conditions necessary to develop sustainable and democratic forms of social reproduction" (McMichael, 2009, p. 308).

In summary, the food sovereignty movement is not only about protecting traditional farming practices or food cultures, nor is it simply about resisting the forces of global agricultural capital. It is a dynamic political proposal that is larger than the simple sum of its parts, and much bigger than any single part in isolation. This will be important in my discussion of organizational approaches to food sovereignty in Chapter Three. The food sovereignty movement re-politicizes the agro-food system and "represents a

reflexive farmers movement for the future” (McMichael, 2009, p. 295) that “highlights the relationships between industrial agriculture and the social reproduction of the global majority as well as...[the construction of] a ethic complex of sovereignty, sufficiency and sustainability...” (p. 308).

In other words, food sovereignty not only demands a paradigm change, it proposes a new paradigm that is based on social and environmental relationships. McMichael (2009) argues that food sovereignty is most completely understood when viewed as a peasantist ontology and “as a method of proposing an alternative modernity” (p. 307). This would be a modernity that does not define development in terms of the end of the peasantry, but rather embraces ontologically and empirically the kind of world that is proposed by food sovereignty: a world in which “social life can be reconstituted around alternative principles that respect the ecological relationships through which social reproduction occurs” (p. 306); a world in which relationships amongst individuals and communities, and with the environment coexist through respectful engagement in argument and debate in order to create an ongoing democratic practice, solidarity and active conceptualization of rights.

FOOD AND DAILY PRACTICES

Food is a space in which multiple social relationships meet, as well as a site of social reproduction for producers and consumers alike. Within the framework of food sovereignty, and because of food’s ability to encompass many elements of analysis, I focus on food as a layered site through which economic and political structures can be questioned through the analysis of daily practices, such as the purchase of canastas.

When food is understood as a complex social site, through which multiple levels of cultural, economic and political relationships are visible, it becomes an invaluable lens

to view society. Food is a vehicle through which we connect to our inner universe (our body and wellbeing) and the outer universe (the people and structures that produce and inform what we eat). Lavin (2012), referencing Probyn (2000) writes,

attention to food reveals our bodies as complex assemblages inexorably implicated in other assemblages—not only the molecular assemblages that organize nutrition and ecology, but industrial assemblages of production and distribution, economic assemblages of labor and exchange and cultural assemblages of cuisine and class (p. 577).

Sage (2012) echoes this sentiment when he writes, “without too much effort, food has the power to convene many different perspectives, cross-cutting issues and questions...unlike any other product, [food] entangles us in webs of relations that connect us to distant others (p. 263).

Food can be used to study a wide range of topics from gender, ethics, and globalization to gastronomy and identity formation. When produced by increasingly industrialized, capital-driven, agro-food systems, food becomes a space in which the contradictions of capitalism are not only visible, but also a space in which these contradictions can be questioned and critiqued (Patel, 2005). This questioning can take place in formal political actions and the demands of social movements, as well as in the daily practices of individuals and communities.

Beyond being a site of multiple, interconnected assemblages as Lavin and Probyn propose, food is something that engages all people in their everyday lives. Given the pertinence of Rossanna Reguillo’s (n.d.) synthesis of the contributions of theoreticians like De Certeau, Giddens and Bourdieu, on the topic of everyday practices, her article “La clandestina centralidad de la vida cotidiana” is essential reading. Daily practices are a dynamic, historically and symbolically constructed space through which numerous actions, ranging from food purchase to personal hygiene, are ordered by time and

location. These practices are of particular importance because of the meanings that they acquire for specific social groups through collective legitimation in specific historic and social contexts (Reguillo, n.d.).

What I would like to emphasize in this discussion of everyday practices is their role in social reproduction as well as the construction of legitimacy and meaning within a dynamic historical process. This is important because it means that these practices can become mechanisms of innovation and change. Reguillo (n.d.) writes, “si la vida cotidiana es el escenario de la reproducción y de la imposición de un orden construido, es también el punto de ruptura de este orden” (p. 8). Everyday practices do not present explicit political strategy, rather they disguise “el potencial de cambio” (p. 10). While reflection does not function within everyday practices in the same way it would in formalized political projects with clear end-goals, actors participate in ongoing evaluations of their daily practices. Canastas comunitarias as everyday practices and Canasta member evaluations of their participation will be the focus of Chapter Four.

CONSUMERIST POLITICS VS. THE POLITICIZATION OF CONSUMPTION⁵

Daily practices order life, and are spaces in which actors can choose to undermine the established social order, question legitimacy and propose new forms (Reguillo, n.d., p. 3). In this section, I turn to food consumption as daily practice and engage the literature on alternative food consumption as political action. As Goodman and DuPuis (2002) show, it is vital to understand the significance of consumption as valuable political space in and of itself and not only in its relationship to production. A potential danger of seeing consumption as valuable political space is limiting this political space to the market and to individual purchasing decisions, discussed below as consumerist politics.

⁵ This phrasing is taken from the conclusion of “The Year of Eating Politically” (2012) by Chad Lavin.

Consumerist politics, understood as the submission of politics to the market, cannot support food sovereignty which calls for ongoing and permanent politicization of agriculture. Rather, food sovereignty requires the politicization of consumption.

An obvious starting place for this discussion is with a definition of alternative consumption. I define alternative consumption as any consumption that entails thought or consideration of the labor, resources, and/or conditions of production, distribution and/or consumption. I use this broad definition of ‘alternative consumption’ instead of ‘conscious,’ ‘responsible,’ or ‘ethical consumption’ purposely to include a broader variety of actors, actions and motivations, and to open this conversation to consumer practices and logics that fall outside of the privileged spaces of organic, local and fair trade consumption.⁶ Defining alternative consumption so broadly creates a space in which a wide gamut of consumer practices, even those that might easily be termed mainstream, can be seen as political in and of themselves and not only based on their influence on production (Goodman and DuPuis, 2002).

Goodman and DuPuis (2002) argue that agro-food studies must move beyond the production-consumption dichotomy and production-centered theoretical frameworks that casts consumers “in stratified, market research terms, without ‘agency’ or meaningful everyday practices” (p. 8). This can be accomplished through the theorization of “food provision and consumption as being co-determined; that is, [as] ‘worlds’ which are conjoined and mutually constituted” (p. 9, citing Lockie and Kitto, 2000). This vision of a mutually constituted relationship between production and consumption means that

how the consumer goes about ‘knowing’ food is just as important as farmers’ knowledge networks in the creation of an alternate food system. By linking these struggles we begin to see the politics of the food system as involving alternative

⁶ There is a large literature about the exclusivity of many alternative food movements (organic, fair trade, local). For more information see Delind 2006, Gutham, 2012, and Markowitz 2012.

‘modes of ordering’ in which food is an arena of contestation instead of a veil of reality (p. 15).

In this overlap between production and consumption, Goodman and DuPuis (2002) see consumers “as both actual and potential actors” and emphasize relationships. They write, “the social relations formed in consumption—both with producers and with other consumers—[should be] regarded as more...than just a-political action” (p. 17). Food then becomes “an arena of struggle, as well as a realm of connectivity” (p. 17).

These political actions are valued based on what they mean to consumers and their ways of knowing the world and ordering meaning, not based on their direct impact on production processes. I agree that consumer actions should be seen as political in their own right, but there are risks in such a stance when applied to the food sovereignty framework. One such risk is losing sight of production processes and the real injustices that exist within them, which would be in direct contradiction with the food sovereignty proposal. As long as consumer politics are seen within a relational and mutually constitutive vision of production and consumption and valued for their ability to affect change across society over time and not as an end in themselves, they can avoid the risk of forgetting production.

A second risk of consumer politics is submitting politics to the market by over exalting individualized consumer choices as politics. In his article “The Year of Eating Politically” (2012), Chad Lavin recounts a brief history of the transition from organic to local as the dominant trope of food activism in the United States.⁷ In both cases he highlights the predominance of the liberal logic of individual choice. Organics grew as

⁷ It is important to highlight that much of the literature about alternative food consumption practices focuses on the US and Europe, with little to no discussion of alternative consumption in the so-called Global South. This means that much care must be taken not to avoid the assumption that alternative consumption practices are limited to certain communities and that the practices that have arisen in the US and Europe are the only possibilities and should therefore be emulated.

individual consumers sought “deliverance from toxicity” through their food choices (p. 578). Local has grown in response to an obsession with efficiency that is directly related to concerns with peak oil and the crises that mark the new century (p. 578-590). According to Lavin,

localism speaks to the specific alienations and anxieties of globalization (from peak oil through national sovereignty) as well as to a population increasingly cynical about political struggle. Most crucially, it reflects a political condition in which it is only in their role as consumers that Americans can imagine political efficacy (p. 583).

In the US context “the rhetoric of citizenship has been abandoned for that of consumerism,” and this has resulted in “a flight from politics” in which consumption of value added goods (local food, organics, fair trade) has been raised to the level of political action (p. 585).

By raising consumption as the market-bound performance of individual responses to the crises of the moment to the level of political action, real political opportunity is lost. In other words, “by locating political action in the actual and metaphorical space of the market, these trends reflect a reduction of political discourse to the terms of global capitalism” and makes the market responsible for meeting all political goals (p. 576). Consumerist politics are this “wholesale colonization of the political imaginary by the logic of the market” (p. 576). As alternative food provision and consumption mechanisms are considered, it is important not to confuse these kinds of consumerist politics with a true politicization of consumption.

Consumerist politics can be understood as part of the neoliberal project to the extent that this project creates a citizenship regime based on the consumption of services. McMichael (2009) explains that the liberalization of agriculture results in the reformulation of the State “under the combined institutions of privatization and

liberalization to accommodate transnational capital mobility” (p. 303). This in turn leads to a crisis of social reproduction, evident in the privatization of public assets and the redefinition of development and citizenship in terms of consumption of market services (p. 303-304). Whereas privatization and liberalization, to which food sovereignty is opposed, propose a consumer citizenship, in which citizenship and access to the State are conceived through consumption of private goods and services, food sovereignty proposes an agrarian citizenship “dedicated to a tactic of reterritorializing the states through revitalizing local food ecologies under the stewardship of the peasant way” (p. 304).

The language of agrarian citizenship clearly focuses on rural life-ways and production, but these ‘local food ecologies’ also include consumers and consumption. If neoliberal policies call for consumerist politics, as exemplified by the Green Economy, or the mainstream sale of fair trade and organic products by corporations like Wal-Mart (Goodman et al., 2010; Patel, 2005; Vía Campesina, 2011b), food sovereignty then demands a politicization of consumption. Such a politicization of consumption would be based on the maintenance and creation of logics of consumption based on relationships, solidarity, rights and democracy.

Although she specifically addresses local food movements in the United States, and not food sovereignty, Delind’s (2006) desire to include non-rational elements of food consumption into the discussion of local food is particularly pertinent. She argues that the US discussion of local food is dominated by an instrumental approach to local food, viewing it as either a “development tool” or as a “vehicle for personal improvement” (p.123-124). Furthermore, she recognizes that local food alternatives “tend to give priority to relationships” and that while these “relationships may be personable and the supply chain shorter and more innovative, the critical bonds and concerns still remain largely econometric in measure” (p.124). This economic vision treats food as a

commodity and “encourages the consumer—and, however ironic, the ‘informed’ consumer especially—to slip into a pattern of narrow self-interest” (p. 125). This “narrow self-interest” easily translates into consumerist politics.

By understanding place as a set of relationships and proposing the creation and maintenance of profound place-food-body connections through place-specific food experiences, Delind explains that cultural concerns

are not merely handmaidens to market success or profitability. They cannot be reduced to something akin to social capital, whose primary function is to support the marketplace. They have a distinctly different nature. They are integral and essential to defining people in place and therefore, food in place (p. 127).

In response to the self-interest created by econometric, instrumentalist approaches to local food, Delind reclaims the importance of culture and relationships as integral parts of food. Therefore, privileging these ‘non-rational’ elements of food becomes a strategy for politicizing food and avoiding consumerist politics. Lavin (2012) shows the dangers of allowing individual food purchase decisions to be a vehicle through which political action is limited to the market, and Delind shows the importance of centering the cultural and relational elements of food. Altogether, Delind’s cultural, relational vision of food becomes an important tool for protecting against the submission of political action to the market.

Little, Maye and Ibery (2010) propose that focusing on collective purchase models “opens up conversation about how to create growth within the [agri-food] sector that goes beyond purely market-led initiatives” (p. 5). Lavin (2012) would agree that collectivizing purchase implies a re-conceptualization of economic activity and a break with individualized visions of the market. According to Little et al. (2010), while models vary widely, collective forms of purchase can push alternative food networks beyond market-oriented logics because “they also provides *services* which fulfill more than the

individual and corporeal objectives of food purchasing and consumption. This translates into a trait of attaching social connotations to the purchase of food which...becomes an intrinsic part of the majority of the buying groups” (p. 29, emphasis in the original).

I would argue that Little et al. (2010) are too quick to privilege collective purchase as a way to develop alternative food networks. Some collective purchase models, despite their inclusion of ‘social connotations’ (p. 29), could easily promote consumerist politics by simply grouping niche market consumers in order to facilitate the purchase of local and organic products without promoting consumer-consumer nor consumer-producer relationships, not to mention without furthering the profound relationships of place, food, and body proposed by Delind (2006). Another weakness of their article is that the social elements of collective purchasing models are discussed as ‘social’ or ‘communitarian’ capital (p. 18), which retro-fits the social elements of food purchase to the language of the market. In Chapter Four I present the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva as an example of collective purchase that values relationships and in which social and economic elements are mutually constituted.

I have presented food, daily practice and consumption as conceptual tools from within the food sovereignty proposal in order to understand the political nature and political potential of these three sites. After a brief discussion of research methods, I turn to the mobilization of the food sovereignty model in Ecuador and the operationalization of the visions of food, daily practice, and consumption politics presented here.

METHODOLOGY

Throughout both phases of this research, I used a combination of semi-structured interviews and participant observation. In the first phase, I conducted eleven interviews with representatives of organizations that address food sovereignty and consumption in

their own work. These organizations were preliminarily identified through recommendations from faculty members at FLACSO (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales) in Quito, and later through snowball recommendations from the organizations themselves.

During this phase of the research I also participated in the first two meetings of the Consumer Commission of the COPISA (Conferencia Plurinacional e Intercultural de Soberanía Alimentaria). These meetings were held at the COPISA offices in the MAGAP (Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería, Acuacultura y Pesca) building, and were attended by representatives of many of the organizations I interviewed among others. The focus of these meetings was to outline objectives for the Consumer Commission as well as strategies for a national campaign for responsible consumption.

During the first phase of research, I interviewed Katiuska Aguilar as a representative of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva in south Quito. During this interview, we discussed a mutual interest in understanding the imaginaries that Canasta members have of their participation, and I began the second phase of my research which focused on the Canasta.

With Aguilar's ongoing collaboration, the second phase of research continued in three strands: 1) participation in the Canasta, 2) thirteen interviews with Canasta members, and 3) five interviews with non-member, neighborhood residents. I participated in canasta distribution on July 23 and August 6 in order to better understand the work of the Canasta. Participating allowed me not only to spend more time with Canasta members, but also to appreciate the multiple elements that converge in the Canasta. The first Saturday that I participated Aguilar introduced me to members of the base group, the ten to twelve individuals who volunteer to run the Canasta, as well as a handful of individuals and families that have participated the longest. Through these introductions, I

made contact with the members that I would later interview. I introduced myself and the project and requested contact information in order to independently set up interviews outside of the Canasta space. In the end, participants were selected based on the duration of their participation in the Canasta as well as their availability and interest in participating in this research.

The second element of this phase of research is the thirteen interviews I conducted with members of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva. The majority of these interviews took place outside of the Canasta space in the homes of participants. Three of these interviews took place during canasta distribution on August 6th. Interviews were divided into two parts. The first part focused on participation and perceptions of the Canasta; the second part sought to collect socioeconomic information about the participating households (income, purchasing practices, education, etc...). Throughout the text, I use pseudonyms to refer to specific individuals who stand apart for the nature of their experience.

The third and final element of this phase of the research was to conduct five interviews with residents of the Barrio General Rumiñahui who do not participate in the Canasta. These interviews were conducted with women who live within a two-block radius of the *Casa Barrial* (neighborhood community center) where the canastas are assembled and distributed to assure that those interviewed would know of the Canasta. All of the interviews took place during the day and on the same day. I went door-to-door explaining the project and requesting interviews. Interviews were conducted on the spot once agreed to by the participant. Due to these circumstances these interviews are limited to households in which the female adult is home during the day. These interviews are shorter and less in depth than those conducted with Canasta members.

Throughout both phases of the research, all interviews were semi-structured. I used an interview guide in order to organize the conversation but not to limit dialogue nor to make the interviews more formal. It was important to me not to interrupt the natural flow of conversation and to let interview participants share with me what they thought was important. The interview guides used for all three sets of interviews (organizations, Canasta members, and Canasta non-members) can be found in Appendix B. Research protocol was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Texas at Austin before research commenced. The confidentiality and anonymity of Canasta members and non-members were guaranteed. Therefore, all names that appear in this text are false and all identifying information has been excluded. The interviews conducted with Canasta members and non-members were audio recorded in all cases that permission for recording was granted by the participant. These recordings were later transcribed and destroyed. The results and analysis of the second phase of research, which focused on the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, were shared with Canasta leadership in February 2012.

In the following chapter I turn to the adoption of the food sovereignty proposal constitutionally, legally and organizationally in Ecuador.

Chapter 3: Food Sovereignty in Ecuador

Keeping in mind the conceptual tools presented in Chapter Two, in this chapter I turn to various interpretations of food sovereignty in Ecuadorian policy and urban-based organizations since President Rafael Correa's first election in 2006. I begin with a short presentation of the historical and political context in which Correa became the favored candidate and the first three years of his presidency in order to situate the inclusion of food sovereignty in the Ecuadorian political context and institutional framework. I then review the inclusion of food sovereignty in the 2008 Constitution, the Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria and the Plan Nacional de Buen Vivir 2009-2013, suggesting that the food sovereignty framework created by these institutions is ambiguous. Finally, I use the interviews conducted with organizations in Quito to discuss perceptions of consumers and food sovereignty in Ecuador as well as the operationalization of the food sovereignty proposal by these organizations and its implications for consumer activism within the food sovereignty framework.

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT: 2006 TO THE PRESENT

Rafael Correa's election as President of the Republic in 2006 came with widespread popular hopes for change fueled by his discourse of breaking with the political status quo and his proposals for radical alternatives to political favoritism, neoliberal policies and social exclusion. Correa, as a young, charismatic candidate, "deftly played on...widespread anti-system sentiments by turning political reform into a central issue in the 2006 presidential election"⁸ (Conaghan, 2007a, p. 824). He won the

⁸ These "anti-system sentiments" came as a consequence of the political, economic and social instability that marked the 90s and early 2000s. The effects of decreased oil prices, the 1987 earthquake, El Niño floods, the collapse of the highly lucrative shrimp market, political instability (the decade between 1996

presidency in the second round of elections in November 2006 with 56.7% of the vote, compared to his opponent, Alvaro Noboa's, 43.3% (Conaghan, 2007a, p. 826).

Early in his presidency, Correa's popularity was maintained in other elections and referenda. In April 2007, 82% of Ecuadorians voted in favor of rewriting the Constitution; in September of the same year, Alianza Pais (AP), the political party Correa formed previous to the 2006 elections, won 73 of the 130 Constituent Assembly seats (Lopez & Cubillos Celis, 2009, p.14); in September 2008 the new 2008 Constitution was accepted by popular referendum with 64% approval; finally, under the 2008 Constitution, Correa was re-elected with 52% of the vote in the first round of elections (Conaghan & de la Torre, 2008, p. 270; Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas, 2009).

Once elected president, Correa's attention quickly turned to making good on his promises of change through the rewriting of the Constitution. The Constituent Assembly was installed in Montecristi, the birthplace of Ecuadorian hero Eloy Alfaro⁹, in

and 2006 saw seven different presidents, including the overthrow of Abdalá Bucaram, Jamil Mahuad and Lucio Gutiérrez), and poor financial management throughout the latter half of the twentieth century all resulted in financial crisis and dollarization in 2000, as well as withering support for the government apparatus (Paz y Miño Cepeda, n.d.; Jokisch, 2007; Conaghan, 2007). In the eyes of many, the situation in which Ecuador found itself in the early 2000s was largely due to neoliberal policy (Paz y Miño Cepeda, n.d.).

Correa posited himself as a break from the neoliberal past. As a symbol of their support, congregated indigenous groups in Zumbahua, Cotopaxi Province, presented Correa with a *bastón de mando* (symbol of leadership) previous to his official inauguration. His speech from this ceremony is representative of his anti-neoliberal discourse:

El 26 de noviembre este País cambió...Como lo dijimos en su momento, la patria vuelve, vuelve para todos...como un milagro, se han derrumbado los gobiernos serviles, las democracias de plastilina y el modelo neoliberal...lo que vivimos no es una época de cambio, es un cambio de época...Al basurero de la historia se debe ir la noche liberal, que está llegando a su fin ("Correa asume presidencia," 2007).

Understandably, his opposition early on in his presidency was mostly comprised of the conservative right and the traditional oligarchy.

⁹ Eloy Alfaro was president of Ecuador from 1897-1901 and 1906-1911 and is known by his nickname, 'el Viejo Luchador,' which he earned for his leadership during the Liberal Revolution (1895-1924). The discourse surrounding Correa's election and the Constituent Assembly tied together Simón Bolívar's fight

November 2007, and the 2008 Constitution was accepted by popular vote in September 2008. The Assembly was organized into ten committees,¹⁰ each of which received proposals from social movements and civil society at Montecristi and organized *foros ciudadanos* (citizen fora) and *mesas itinerantes* (itinerant tables) in cities throughout Ecuador in order to socialize constitutional proposals and broaden access to the process (Peralta, 2008). The drafting process, while not without problems, was an inclusive process that sought not only to write a new constitution but to propose “una nueva forma de hacer política” (Acosta, 2008, p.24). Alberto Acosta (2008), member of AP and president of the Assembly from its inauguration until his resignation in June 2008,¹¹ referred to the work of the Constituent Assembly and the resulting Constitution as a collective construction of a “proyecto de vida, equilibrado entre todos los individuos y entre la colectividad con la Naturaleza” (p. 50), revealing a vision of the Constituent process as participatory and dedicated to radical change.

For the progressive currents in Ecuador, the first years of Correa’s administration were filled with expectations of change as well as concern. Wide-spread institutional reforms, consolidation of executive power, questions of the veracity and depth of the commitment to participation, as well as early concerns about the cooptation of political spaces were all worrisome for careful onlookers (Becker, 2011; Conaghan, 2007b).

for independence, Eloy Alfaro’s Liberal Revolution and Correa’s *Revolución Ciudadana* (Citizen’s Revolutions) as related revolutionary cycles.

¹⁰ The Committees were: 1) Derechos fundamentales y garantías constitucionales, 2) Organización, participación social y ciudadana, y sistemas de representación, 3) Estructura e instituciones del Estado, 4) Ordenamiento territorial y asignación de competencias, 5) Recursos naturales y biodiversidad, 6) Trabajo, producción e inclusión social, 7) Régimen de desarrollo, 8) Justicia y lucha contra la corrupción, 9) Soberanía, relaciones internacionales e integración latinoamericana, and 10) Legislación y fiscalización.

¹¹ Acosta stepped down because there was disagreement within AP about meeting the original July deadline or pro-longing the drafting process in order to create more room for debate. In his resignation speech, he said, “Esta disposición y posición personal, de no sacrificar el debate por la premura del plazo, no es compartida en sus alcances y con lo que ello significa en tiempos por la mayoría de la cúpula de Acuerdo País [additional name for AP], movimiento al cual pertenezco y reafirmo mi adscripción” (2008, p. 49). Acosta has since broken these ties and remains a thoughtful critical voice

Despite these early concerns, Ecuador's 2008 Constitution is widely recognized as progressive due to its discussion of *buen vivir* (living well),¹² its definition of the State as plurinational and intercultural, and its inclusion of numerous socio-economic issues ranging from the recognition of collective property and informal work to indigenous knowledge and bicultural education, to name just a few. In terms of agriculture and food, the 2008 Constitution was groundbreaking in its inclusion of food sovereignty and for giving rights to the earth.

Here is it important to remember that the 2008 Constitution, in its ability to propose alternatives, is “el trabajoso producto de luchas y aprendizajes de siglos” (Gargarella, 2008; see also Rosero Garcés, 2008; Acosta, 2008). As an example of this sentiment in the Constituent Assembly, Acosta, in the speech he gave to inaugurate the Assembly, reminded his fellow representatives that, “Contamos con una valiosa memoria acumulada en tantas jornadas de lucha popular” (2008, p.12). Interviewees from the Coordinación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones Campesinas (CLOC), Agrónomos y Veterinarios Sin Fronteras (AVSF), and Circuitos Alternativos de Comercialización (CIALCO) also mentioned the inclusion of food sovereignty in the 2008 Constitution as demonstrative of the inclusion of long histories of indigenous and *campesino* (farmer) movements in the national debate.

However, the inclusion of food sovereignty in the 2008 Constitution was not easily won. Based on his own discursive opposition to neoliberalism, it could have been expected that Correa would support the food sovereignty proposal in its anti-neoliberal stance. Instead, the inclusion of food sovereignty in the Constitution was marked by

¹² Buen vivir is the Spanish translation of the Quichua term, *sumak kawsay*. Drawing on indigenous cosmovisions, buen vivir is posited as an alternative vision of development that questions neoliberal logic and does not accept occidental, linear visions of development. This in turn questions constructions of underdevelopment (Acosta & Martínez 2009; Acosta, 2009b).

tension and contradiction. Below I summarize the political maneuverings on behalf of the Executive and Assembly members as well as the social movement organizing that took place throughout the Constituent process.

The agro-food sector in Ecuador has traditionally favored agro-business and agro-export as the “modernizing” path to rural development,¹³ but the political climate that surrounded the 2008 Constituent Assembly created a space for more voices to be heard. Food sovereignty was debated by Committee Six: Trabajo, producción e inclusión social, which was divided into four working groups. The working group that addressed food sovereignty was entitled “De propiedad, inversión y soberanía alimentaria” and was made up of three of the thirteen Committee members (Rosero Garcés, 2008).

The actors involved in the debates were numerous: within the government, both MAGAP (Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería, Acuacultura y Pesca) and MCDS (Ministerio de Coordinación del Desarrollo Social) were against the food sovereignty proposal, maintaining that rural development would only happen through the development of value chains linking small farmers to commercial and industrial agriculture. MIES (Ministerio de Inclusión y Economía Social) on the other hand, supported the food sovereignty proposal, while SENPLADES (Secretaría Nacional de

¹³ The Ecuadorian land reforms in 1964 and 1973 were driven by a strong interest of elites to modernize agriculture by replacing the feudal *huasipungo* system with capital-driven agriculture. Zamosc (1993) points out that this modernizing drive was in response to the banana boom in the early 60s and the petroleum boom in the 70s. While a considerable amount of land was redistributed, indigenous, campesino families were often given the most difficult to cultivate lands, meaning that real potential for self-sufficiency and social reproduction was extremely limited. The quest to modernize agriculture was closely tied to the quest for industrialization: a modern agricultural system would provide cheap labor and food for the industrializing cities (Bretón solo de Zaldívar, 1997; Gascon, 2010). Inserting Ecuadorian agriculture into the global economy was the ultimate goal of the land reforms. Through the late 70s and early 80s this goal was better met by the counter-reforms; and through the late 80s and the early 90s, neoliberal inspired policy was best able to meet these demands by strengthening export oriented and corporate agriculture, as well as the re-concentration of land, water and other natural resources. These trends were codified in the 1994 Ley de Desarrollo Agrario (Zapatta, 2007). Zapatta (2007) writes, “hasta el momento, han prevalecido los proyectos modernizantes del agro sostenidos por las clases dominantes; el Ecuador no ha vivido aún un proceso de modificación profunda de las relaciones sociales de producción del agro” (p.57).

Planificación y Desarrollo) flip-flopped between food security and the “nuevo paradigma de soberanía alimentaria” (Rosero Garcés, 2008) While the traditional agricultural chambers of commerce and cattle associations did not participate in the debates, PRONACA and Supermaxi, two of the largest industrial food companies in the country, did. Additionally, numerous indigenous and campesino organizations supported the inclusion of food sovereignty in the constitutional project (Rosero Garcés, 2008).

According to Rosero Garcés, FENOCIN (Confederación de Organizaciones Campesinas, Indígenas y Negras del Ecuador) and the CONFESUNASSC-CNC (Confederación Unitaria de Organizaciones Campesinas Afiliadas al Seguro Social Campesino-Coordinadora Nacional Campesina) had the “tesis mas avanzadas sobre soberanía alimentaria en Montecristi,” but other groups like FENACLE (Federación Nacional de Trabajadores Agroindustriales, Campesinos e Indígenas Libres del Ecuador), the CNC-Eloy Alfaro (Coordinadora Nacional Campesina Eloy Alfaro), CONAIE (Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador), and ECUARUNARI (Confederación de los Pueblos de Nacionalidad Kichua del Ecuador) also participated.¹⁴ Rosero Garcés (2008) depicts the contributions of these organizations as uncoordinated. He also explains that beyond participation in the official Constituent Assembly spaces,

¹⁴ Ecuador has a long and dynamic history of indigenous and campesino organizing. During the 90s, the Ecuadorian indigenous movement was recognized as amongst the strongest in the region because of its national level confederation, CONAIE, and for the pressure it was able to exert through large mobilizations in 1990, 1992, 1994 and 2000 (Clark & Becker, 2007, p. 1-4). The CONAIE was formed in 1986 by the unification of ECUARUNARI, the indigenous federation of the *sierra* (highlands), and CONFENAIE, of the Amazonian lowlands. In 1996 CONAIE created a political party, Pachakutic, through which it formally entered institutional politics (Yashar, 2005; Pallares, 2002; Van Cott, 2002; Clark & Becker, 2007). Since its alliance with the military to oust President Jamil Mahuad in January of 2000, and its participation in the presidency of Lucio Gutiérrez (overthrown in 2003), CONAIE and the movement have been confronted with internal disagreements and loss of articulation (León Trujillo, 2010). CONAIE currently is among the voices most critical of Correa. FENOCIN, on the other hand, has maintained a closer relationship with the Correa administration.

these organizations combined their proposals with active mobilizations, protests, and a festival of local foods and seeds.

The importation of genetically modified seeds and land reform were two of the most contested topics in these debates. The text that was approved by the Committee and sent to the Assembly for the first of two rounds of debate was heavily criticized by social movements “por no reflejar las propuestas de los actores sociales y dejar la puerta abierta al agro-negocio, la importación de alimentos, los transgénicos y los agro-combustibles” (Rosero Garcés, 2008). The original proposal that was going to be presented by the Committee had been thrown out at the last minute, when a new text came down from a small group of people close to the Executive branch. Finally, FENOCIN leadership was able to bring the organizations together to formulate a new proposal. This formulation was recorded in a document called “El consenso de Quito” (May 2008) and is largely included in the final text of the Constitution. Despite these inclusions, the “posición light” that sought to introduce the topic of food sovereignty “sin abordar los puntos críticos, con la expectativa de hacerlo posteriormente en leyes y reglamentos” became constitutional law instead of the radical position which sought more immediate structural change especially around access to resources for production (Rosero Garcés, 2008).

As Rosero Garcés (2008) shows, the process of including food sovereignty in the 2008 Constitution, while inclusive of many voices, was contentious, which illustrates Correa’s administration’s lack of a clear position towards the agro-food sector. This lack of clarity was further evidenced by the Mandato Agrario that was proposed by Correa in response to increasing food prices and passed by the Constituent Assembly in July 2008. The Mandato Agrario provided subsidies for “importadores de agroquímicos, comercializadores y grandes productores de alimentos” (Acosta, 2009a; see also Rosero Garcés, 2008). Despite the difficulties that marked the work of Committee Six, Rosero

Garcés writes, “este logro [el articulado sobre soberanía alimentaria] es una innovación a escala mundial, en América Latina y por supuesto en Ecuador” (2008). While the Constituent Assembly process and the 2008 Constitution represented important steps forward, as Acosta made clear in his inaugural speech, “el verdadero proceso constituyente” would come after the approval of the Constitution (2008, p. 12).

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN ECUADOR’S CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Keeping in mind the difficulties and debates surrounding the inclusion of food sovereignty in the 2008 Constitution, I now turn to the food sovereignty content in the Constitution itself, as well as the LORSA (Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria), and the Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2009-2013.

2008 Constitution

Ecuador’s 2008 Constitution introduces food sovereignty in Article 13 which is found in Título II: Derechos, Capítulo dos: Derechos de buen vivir, Sección una: Agua y alimentación. The location of the Article shows that food sovereignty is considered an integral part of the new development paradigm framed by buen vivir. Article 13 reads:

Las personas y colectividades tienen derecho al acceso seguro y permanente a alimentos sanos, suficientes y nutritivos; preferentemente producidos a nivel local y en correspondencia con sus diversas identidades y tradiciones culturales. El Estado ecuatoriano promoverá la soberanía alimentaria (Ecuador 2008 Constitution).

Article 281 in Título VI where the development regime is further outlined, enters into greater detail about food sovereignty:

La soberanía alimentaria constituye un objetivo estratégico y una obligación del Estado para garantizar que las personas, comunidades, pueblos y nacionalidades alcancen la autosuficiencia de alimentos sanos y culturalmente apropiados de forma permanente (Ecuador 2008 Constitution, Article 281).

Food sovereignty is characterized as a responsibility of the State at the national level. Article 281 continues by listing fourteen specific responsibilities of the Ecuadorian State in order to fulfill its obligation, which include promoting a just and solidary system of commercialization, protecting biodiversity, regulating biotechnology, facilitating access to land, productive resources and financing for small producers, driving small, medium, solidary and community production as well as protecting the national agricultural sector (Ecuador 2008 Constitution). I highlight the tenth item on this list because it indicates mechanisms similar to the Canastas Comunitarias:

[Será responsabilidad del Estado]...Fortalecer el desarrollo de organizaciones y redes de productores y de consumidores, así como las de comercialización y distribución de alimentos que promueva la equidad entre espacios rurales y urbanos (Ecuador 2008 Constitución, Art 281: 10).

Other elements that support food sovereignty were included in Article 282 which discusses access to land, and Article 288, which addresses public purchase from small and medium producers (Rosero Garcés, 2008). Beyond the articles in which food sovereignty is directly addressed, the importance given to the framework by the 2008 Constitution is evident in its inclusion among the five laws that were most prioritized by the transitory regime provided at the end of the Constitutional text. Along with topics of high importance like “la ley electoral, la ley reguladora de la Función Judicial, del Consejo de la Judicatura y la que regula el Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social,” the law of food sovereignty was given a period of 120 days after the acceptance of the new Constitution to be written and approved (Ecuador 2008 Constitution, Disposiciones transitorias).

Ultimately, despite the ‘light’ approach to food sovereignty taken by the Constitution, the document does reflect rights discourse and includes many other key

elements of the proposal, such as promoting local markets, small farmers, and just systems of commercialization and distribution.

Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria

Including food sovereignty in the constitutional framework and leaving the critical work of rethinking the agro-food system for later laws and regulations meant that a lot was riding on the Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria (LORSA). But instead of tackling the issues head on, the LORSA maintained the “posición light” of the 2008 Constitution and further delayed the polemic debates around restructuring agriculture.

The LORSA was not approved until February 2009, well beyond the three month transitory time proposed at the end of the Constitution. Originally the Law was meant to be a comprehensive makeover of the agro-food system. Some of the first drafts reached 300 pages, but as the original deadline moved farther and farther into the past, the Executive demanded that the Law be presented. In one night, it was reduced to thirty-five pages that avoided the contentious issues and served simply as a framework for the later drafting of agricultural laws. The law entered the first round of assembly debates with only five signatures. It passed the two rounds of debates, and then suffered a partial presidential veto that weakened the already weak Law (Acosta, 2009a; LaForge, Representative AVSF, personal communication June 17, 2011).

The presidential veto weakened the content of the LORSA and raised procedural questions. Acosta (2009a) proposes that the partial presidential veto reduced the spaces for citizen participation as well as diminishing the Laws’ position against increased subsidies for large producers, illegal occupation of mangrove land by the shrimp industry, the concentration of land, and the use of agro-food products for the production of bio-fuels. Of additional concern is the fact that the Law was passed and the presidential veto

occurred at the end of the a thirty-day time period “sin que la legislatura apruebe o rechace el veto presidencial,” meaning that the law passed without real debate or participation (Acosta, 2009a). This leads to questions concerning participation, transparency and executive power, in addition to the concerns raised by the weakening of the content of the Law.

The LORSA was amended in 2010 almost a year after it was originally passed. The amended Law includes changes to Articles 31-35 which outline the functions and composition of the SISAN and the COPISA (discussed below). The amendments to the COPISA came from within the COPISA in an attempt to gain and protect autonomy from the government apparatus (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, July 22, 2011). Previous to this amendment, the COPISA was simply called the Conferencia Nacional de Soberanía Alimentaria; its title was amended to include the terms ‘plurinational’ and ‘intercultural.’ The amendment also altered the transitory regime outlined at the end of the Law (FAOlex).

The Law in its 2010 version “tiene por objeto establecer los mecanismos mediante los cuales el Estado cumpla con su obligación y objetivo estratégico de garantizar a las personas, comunidades y pueblos la autosuficiencia de alimentos sanos, nutritivos y culturalmente apropiados de forma permanente” (LORSA, Art. 1, 2010). The Law emphasizes the small and medium producers in its discussion of access to productive resources and paths of commercialization, protection of agro-biodiversity, support for investigation and a diálogo de saberes,¹⁵ regulation of biotechnology, protection of

¹⁵ Diálogo de saberes recognizes that scientific/rational ways of knowing the world are not the only ways of knowing the world, and demands debate in which ancestral, relational or ecological ontologies are able to occupy the same space as scientific/rational knowledge without being discredited or dismissed. Diálogo de saberes questions the hegemony and domination of euro-centric knowledge, and is an essential mechanism for the forging of a plurinational state (See Leff 2006; CODENPE, 2011; Dávalos, 2002).

internal food supply, regulation of foreign trade, guarantee of health and food safety, and social participation in food sovereignty (LORSA, 2010).

In addition to touching on these themes, the LORSA makes connections between food sovereignty, solidary economy and buen vivir, as well as creating two new institutions: the SISAN (Sistema de Soberanía Alimentaria y Nutricional), and the COPISA (Conferencia Plurinacional e Intercultural de Soberanía Alimentaria).

While it was unfortunate that the LORSA did not take a firm position on land reform, genetically modified crops or agri-business, it is undeniable that it represents an important advancement for food sovereignty in Ecuador. The value of framing further agricultural laws within the context of food sovereignty should not be undervalued. Despite the fact that the LORSA is a far cry from the comprehensive law that was imagined when the drafting process began, it suggests the following topics for future Laws to be drafted, debated, and approved by the Asamblea Nacional:

el uso y acceso a las tierras, territorios y comunas; agro-biodiversidad y semillas; desarrollo agrario agroindustria y empleo agrícola; sanidad animal y vegetal; agroecología; comercio y abastecimiento alimentario; consumo nutrición y salud alimentaria; pesca, acuicultura y manglares; [y] acceso de las ciudadanas y ciudadanos al crédito público, seguro y subsidios alimentarios (LORSA, Art. 34, 2010).

The LORSA is not explicit about which specific laws should be included beneath it, but there is a general understanding that the laws to be written will correspond roughly with the eight commissions that form the COPISA (“Plan Estratégico,” 2009). The Ley de Tierras y Territorios, and the Ley de Agrobiodiversidad, Semillas y Agroecología are expected to be among the most contested laws.

The SISAN and COPISA are two institutions created by the LORSA to facilitate the democratic participation of civil society in the drafting of the remaining agriculture laws and in the advancement and protection of Ecuador’s food sovereignty. Both

institutions are laid out in Título V: Participación social para la soberanía alimentaria of the LORSA. The SISAN

es el conjunto articulado de personas, comunas, comunidades, pueblos y nacionalidades, actores sociales, institucionales y estatales involucrados en la construcción participativa de propuestas de políticas públicas relacionadas con el régimen de la soberanía alimentaria (LORSA, Artículo 31.1, 2010).

The SISAN is comprised of representatives from four government ministries (MAGAP, Ministerio del Ambiente, MIES, Ministerio de Salud Pública), local government representatives, and the COPISA. The LORSA is unclear on what the specific differences of these two institutions are.

The COPISA “es una instancia de debate, deliberación, veeduría y generación de propuestas en esta material [de soberanía alimentaria] desde la sociedad civil” (LORSA, Art. 32, 2010). Through these capacities the COPISA is meant to be a bridge between civil society and the government (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, June 22, 2011). It is comprised of eight elected representatives: one representative of universities, technical schools and research institutions, one consumer representative, one representative of artisanal fishermen and collectors, two representatives of small and medium producer associations and three representatives of campesino organizations. Each member heads a commission. The eight commissions of the COPISA are 1) Tierra, Territorios y Comunas, 2) Agrobiodiversidad, Semillas y Agroecología, 3) Sanidad e Inocuidad Alimentaria, 4) Procesamiento y Agroindustria, 5) Comercio y Abastecimiento Alimentario, 6) Consumo, Nutrición y Salud Alimentaria 7) Pesca, Ecosistemas Marinos y Manglares, 8) Capital, Incentivos e Infraestructura Productiva (“Plan Estratégico,” 2009). Both the SISAN and the COPISA, while created by the LORSA, were weakened by the presidential veto, and their purposes, roles and autonomy were left unclear (Acosta, 2009a; LaForge, Representative AVSF, personal communication June 17, 2011).

Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2009-2013

Beyond the 2008 Constitution and the LORSA, food sovereignty also appears as a central axis of the Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2009-2013 (PNBV), which outlines the development plan of Correa's government. The PNBV provides a comprehensive vision of food sovereignty, touching on the history and importance of the proposal, as well as connecting to it numerous elements of production, distribution and consumption.

For each of the numerous topics that the PNBV addresses, it gives a brief synopsis of history and current conditions before presenting its proposal. Food sovereignty is discussed throughout the text, but its historical precedents are presented in Objective Five (of twelve): Garantizar la soberanía y la paz, e impulsar la inserción estratégica en el mundo y la integración latinoamericana, in which food sovereignty is related to the broader discussion of integrated sovereignty. The PNBV understands food sovereignty as “un cambio sustancial frente a una condición histórica de dependencia y vulnerabilidad, en lo concerniente a la producción y el consumo” (SENPLADES, 2009, p. 222). Here the PNBV discusses the history and development of food security and introduces food sovereignty as its successor:

[soberanía alimentaria] se rebasa a la seguridad alimentaria porque no es suficiente tener acceso en todo momento a los alimentos que necesitamos para llevar una vida activa y sana, sino que dichos alimentos deben responder a las necesidades históricas y culturales de los pueblos, no alentándose de una importación indiscriminada de alimentos procesados ni tampoco favoreciendo una lógica agroindustrial monopolística, pero por sobre todo auspiciando una provisión estratégica y soberana de alimentos que no afecte la independencia del Estado (p. 222).

The PNBV recognizes the negative effects of the liberalization of agriculture and increased focus on export goods on small farmers' access to the means of production and on the “*bien común*” (general well-being) more broadly (p. 18-79 & 151), and defines food sovereignty as the recuperation of “el rol de la sociedad para decidir qué producir,

cómo producir, dónde producir y para quién producir, con énfasis en fortalecer a los pequeños campesinos” (p. 137).

As well as recounting the historical and structural elements of food sovereignty, the PNVB connects food sovereignty to numerous other elements of political and economic life, including plans for the recognition of diverse forms of property, protection of national job generating sectors, selective import substitution, environmental protection and sustainability, biodiversity, democratization of the means of production, energy policy, water and irrigation, and mining and extractive industries. By requiring that policy implemented in all of these areas does not have a negative impact on food sovereignty, the Plan demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of food sovereignty as a proposal for change that influences all elements of national life.

In addition to connecting food sovereignty to a wide variety of sectors, in relationship to the content of food sovereignty the Plan states “es necesario incidir tanto en las condiciones de producción, distribución y consumo de alimentos” (p. 338). Nevertheless, the Plan directs a majority of its food sovereignty content at producers and rural buen vivir. This is based on an understanding that “desde los territorios rurales se generan las condiciones de base para la soberanía alimentaria” (p. 137) which requires an emphasis on “los pequeños campesinos que, en el caso del Ecuador, son quienes producen los alimentos de la canasta básica” (p. 137). Under Objective Eleven: Establecer un sistema económico social, solidario y sostenible, the Plan dictates a set of policy suggestions to “impulsar las condiciones productivas necesarias para el logro de la soberanía alimentaria” (p. 304), which include supporting artisanal fishing, repurposing non-agricultural land, protecting local food production through mechanisms like subsidies, supporting the conservation and recuperation of traditional products and seeds, production for national consumption, and a national food industry. Through these

mechanisms as well as through the democratization of access to land and productive resources, the facilitation of seed exchange, the protection and sustainability of water resources and biodiversity, food sovereignty is a pillar of guaranteeing social reproduction in rural areas (p. 337).

While the Plan emphasizes production and rural development, it does not leave consumption behind. In Objective Eleven, the PNVB positions food sovereignty as part of structural change in the economic cycle started by the 2008 Constitution and asserts that

como parte del [nuevo] ciclo económico, y en marco de una conciencia social y ambiental, se requieren políticas activas en torno al consumo. Resulta urgente la generalización de patrones de consumo responsables para, de ese modo, fortalecer la soberanía alimentaria y la economía endógena para el Buen Vivir” (p. 297).

Consumption practices are also the center of many of the policy recommendations listed in Objective Eleven and in other policy recommendations related to growing and protecting a national industry.

Despite the historical-political vision of food sovereignty presented by the PNBV and the ability of the Plan to draw numerous and complex connections, it flip-flops between radical proposals, for example the repurposing of land, to potentially problematic positions, like the production of biofuels. In Objective Eleven, one of the policies for creating the conditions of food sovereignty, proposes to “Reconvertir en casos específicos, unidades dedicadas al monocultivo exportador hacia la producción de alimentos para el mercado local, cuando se trate de recuperar vocaciones productivas previas o de mejorar los ingresos de las y los productores directos” (Política 11.3, p. 304). This proposal of repurposing land away from export oriented uses to the uses of small farmers and national production is quite radical, and clearly in line with the food sovereignty proposal.

Conversely, in its discussion of changes to the energy structure, the PNBV promotes the production of bio-fuels as long as this production is limited to already degraded land and does not extend the agricultural frontier (p. 120). This position in favor of the production of biofuels is much less aligned with food sovereignty than other elements of the PNBV. As these two examples show, despite the strength of the food sovereignty proposal in the PNBV, the Plan also has weak spots.

As I have shown, the inclusion of food sovereignty in the 2008 Constitution, the LORSA, and in the PNBV was contentious and achieved by the persistence of social organizations. Despite the undeniable value of this inclusion, all three documents, especially the 2008 Constitution and the LORSA, are ambiguous in regards to the real content of reformulating the agro-food system and the implementing food sovereignty. In contrast to the other two documents, and despite its weak points, the PNBV presents a surprisingly comprehensive approach to food sovereignty and its relationship to other sectors of economic and social life. Unfortunately, the Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir carries less legal weight.

The continual delay in addressing the issues, and the diminished space for participation, has given the current Ecuadorian government an opportunity to continue implementing agricultural policy that favors agri-business and export-oriented production, despite the negative effects of these trends on small-farmer livelihoods, agro-biodiversity, and justice more broadly.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the vision of food sovereignty presented by the three documents discussed here addresses issues of production, commercialization and consumption. Additionally, the documents suggest that that the

¹⁶ Correa and his administration have been harshly criticized for their positions on the environment and extractive industries, which have proven to be quite opposed to a discursive commitment to buen vivir, solidary economy and social inclusion.

relationships between producers and consumers must change in order for the way that agriculture and food are envisioned to change.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ECUADOR'S FOOD SOVEREIGNTY FRAMEWORK

The food sovereignty proposal was weakened by the political maneuvering surrounding its inclusion in the 2008 Constitution and the drafting of the LORSA. Despite the comprehensive understanding of the food sovereignty proposal in the PNBV, the political and legal interpretations of food sovereignty in Ecuador are relatively weak. In this section, I use interviews with Quito-based organizations¹⁷ that work on food sovereignty to show trends in the way consumers and food sovereignty are perceived by organization representatives as well as trends in strategies for implementing food sovereignty. The organization representatives that I interviewed tended to agree on the importance of consumption and consumer choices in the agro-food system and on a general lack of knowledge about food sovereignty. They also shared a vision of consumers as simplistic and self-centered. Additionally, my interviewees shared a positive, though cautious, valuation of the inclusion of food sovereignty in the Ecuadorian legal environment. In their implementation of programs most organizations seem to reduce the food sovereignty proposal to a single element. This simplification points to a difficulty of the proposal and represents a reduction of the political proposal inherent in food sovereignty.

¹⁷ These interviews were conducted with individuals who spoke on behalf of their organization. This means that the information and opinions shared give a glimpse of organizational and personal positions, which are at times hard to differentiate. Furthermore, all of this information reflects the specific moment in which I conducted the interviews, meaning that they may reflect firm positions or current reactions to the specific political moment. Due to these factors the discussion here is suggestive but not conclusive.

I begin by briefly introducing the organizations I interviewed, the work they do related to food sovereignty, my classification of the organization in general and of their approach to food sovereignty. All of this information is summarized in Table 1.

--The Consumer Commission is one of eight commissions that make up the COPISA. The COPISA is one of the institutional spaces created by the LORSA to guarantee the participation of civil society in the content and implementation of the food sovereignty framework in Ecuador. I participated in the first two meetings of the Commission on June 22 and July 22. The Consumer Commission is discussed in further detail later.

-- CIALCO (Circuitos Alternativos de Comercialización) is a project run by MAGAP that focuses on mechanisms of alternative commercialization such as *ferias* (local markets), *canastas*, *tiendas campesinas* (country stores), public purchase, and export, in order to “potenciar la producción familiar que tiene pocas posibilidades de acceder a grandes mercados, transporte, etc...” (Ponce, representative CIALCO, personal communication June 20, 2011).

--PROBIO (Corporación Ecuatoriana de Productores Biológicos) is a national *gremio* (guild) of producers committed to agroecological production. The association has three principal areas of work: agroecological production, direct commercialization that builds stronger relationships between the city and the countryside, and political activism (Peña, representative PROBIO, personal communication, July 5, 2011).

-- The CLOC (Coordinación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones Campesinas) is the regional arm of the Vía Campesina for Latin America. It will be based in Quito from 2010-2014. The CLOC supports local organizations in Ecuador and other countries in Latin America in order to uphold the regional agenda of member organizations. The CLOC represents many long standing campesino and indigenous organizations.

--VECO Andino is a Belgian international development organization that focuses on promoting small farmers and their integration into value chains. According to the VECO Andino representatives, “s una de las pocas ONGs que realmente está trabajando el consumo” (Renckens, personal communication July 26, 2011).

-- AVSF (Agrónomos y Veterinarios Sin Fronteras) is another international development NGO. AVSF focuses on producers and their production through rural development projects.

-- RGS (Red de Guardianes de Semillas) is a network of producers and consumers dedicated to agroecology, sustainability, and the maintenance of culinary and agricultural traditions through the preservation and sharing of indigenous seeds and ancestral technologies (Carrera, representative RGS, personal communication June 23, 2012). The network stretches from Nariño, Colombia to Loja, Ecuador (www.redsemillas.org).

--Slow Food Ecuador is the national branch of the international movement/association started by Carlo Petrini in Italy. Slow Food seeks to promote food that is healthy and sustainable for consumers, producers and the environment by promoting local gastronomy. Slow Food International calls this eco-gastronomy, as a reminder of the relationships between food and the earth (<http://www.slowfood.com/>).

--Acción Ecológica is a local organization that engages in research and social campaigns to support environmental protection and sustainability. Acción Ecológica is committed to protecting the environment while working “de la mano con las organizaciones campesinas e indígenas” (León, representative Acción Ecológica, personal communication July 28, 2011).

-- IEE (Instituto de Estudios Ecuatorianos) is a local, non-profit research institution that focuses on local development, social movements, gender and the environment (IEE, Website). The Institute’s approach to food sovereignty has been “más

que nada por el contenido político (leyes, política, gobierno). [El Instituto] busca disputarle al gobierno el sentido de la soberanía alimentaria” (Herrera, representative IEE, personal communication June 24, 2011).

--As previously introduced, the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva is an independent neighborhood organization in which members come together to buy produce together in order to reduce cost and intermediation. This Canasta is the focus of Chapter Four.

--The Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta is the national network of Canasta organizations. Roberto Gortaire is one of the founders and leaders of the network as well as the consumer representative for the COPISA. I interviewed him once to discuss both organizations and their work.

	Organization/Project Name	Organization/Project Type	Approach to Food Sovereignty
1	COPISA's Consumer Commission	State sponsored institutional space for the facilitation of civil society's participation in food sovereignty	Health
2	CIALCO (Circuitos Alternativos de Comercialización)	Project through the MAGAP	Alternative commercialization
3	PROBIO (Corporación Ecuatoriana de Productores Biológicos)	National guild of producers	Agroecology
4	CLOC (Coordinación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones Campesinas)	Regional arm of Vía Campesina	Campesino struggles
5	VECO Andino	International development NGO	Value chains
6	AVSF (Agrónomos y Veterinarios Sin Fronteras)	International Development NGO	Rural development
7	RGS (Red de Guardianes de Semillas)	Regional network (Colombia and Ecuador)	Health
8	Slow Food Ecuador	National chapter of international association	Eco-gastronomy
9	Acción Ecológica	Local environmental protection organization	Ecology and sustainability
10	IEE (Instituto de Estudios Ecuatorianos)	Local research institute	Politics, Research
11	Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva	Independent neighborhood organization	Consumer savings
12	Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta	National network of canastas	Canastas

Table 1: Organizational Approaches to Food Sovereignty

This is not a comprehensive list of organizations that work on food sovereignty in Quito; rather, the twelve organizations (eleven interviews) represented here cover a broad range of organizations that look at food sovereignty from a variety of perspectives, ranging from research (IEE), to farmer organizing (the CLOC) to creating alternative commercialization options (PROBIO, CIALCO).¹⁸ Of the twelve organizations included here, some focus more specifically on the intersection of food sovereignty and

¹⁸ See Appendix C for a full interview list.

consumption than others. While I tried to understand visions of the role of consumption in the food sovereignty proposal from several perspectives, there are many other important organizations that address food sovereignty and consumption that were not included because of logistical limitations (MESSE, Heifer, Oxfam, Ekorural, SIPAE, to name a few).

Perceptions of consumers and food sovereignty in Ecuador

Despite the diversity of organizations interviewed, their representatives tended to share four perception about consumers and food sovereignty in Ecuador. First of all, my interviewees expressed the importance of consumer choice in the food sovereignty project frequently. Secondly, there was consensus on a general lack of knowledge about the food sovereignty proposal, and a perceived lack of consumer-based interest in the proposal. Thirdly, the organization representatives I interviewed shared a vision of consumers as simplistic and self-centered. As I will show, this vision of consumers limits their ability to engage in complex politics. Finally, I point to a positive, though critical valuation of the legal framework of food sovereignty.

Amongst the organization representatives I interviewed there was a consistent understanding of the importance of consumption and consumer choices in achieving greater food sovereignty. This is obvious in organizations that focus on consumption like VECO Andino, the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, Slow Food Ecuador, COPISA's Consumer Commission, and the Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta. The importance of consumer choice was also expressed by representatives of organizations that do not focus on consumption, in comments like “el consumidor es el mejor aliado para poner presión social [para soberanía alimentaria]” (Peña, representative PROBIO, personal

communication July 5, 2011) and “no va haber ningun cambio sin una transformación de consumo” (Ponce, representative CIALCO, personal communication June 20, 2011).

Additionally there was strong consensus that the food sovereignty proposal is ambiguous and not widely known. This was commented in general, within the government and especially amongst consumers. The interviewee from IEE remarked that “en el país, la propuesta de soberanía alimentaría es una propuesta relativamente débil” (Herrera, personal communication June 24, 2011). Additionally, representatives from PROBIO, CIALCO and AVSF all pointed out lack of knowledge of food sovereignty among members of the government. Peña from PROBIO mentioned that in addition to little knowledge of the topic, “muchos en el gobierno hablan de seguridad y soberanía alimentaria como si fueran la misma cosa” (Personal Communication, July 5, 2011). Similarly, LaForge from AVSF, reflecting on the drafting process of the LORSA and the present context, explained that “soberanía alimentaria era, y sigue siendo, un concepto bastante abstracto” (Personal communication, June 17, 2011). The representative from CIALCO explained that the ambiguity of food sovereignty takes place as the demands of social movements is formalized in laws (Ponce, personal communication, June 20, 2011).

Even more pronounced in these interviews was the perception of consumer lack of knowledge of food sovereignty and its implications. In the discussion of consumer lack of knowledge and articulation related to food sovereignty, the ideas of savings/price and health as consumer preoccupations were mentioned repeatedly. Peña from PROBIO told me “los consumidores no están articulados” in part because they are motivated by price (Personal communication, July 5, 2011). This comment expresses a perception that consumer decisions can only be motivated by price and savings, which was echoed by the interviewee from the CLOC. Flores took a slightly more systemic perspective and explained that consumers choose what is most inexpensive, which leaves poor people

with little choice than to “*invenarse*” (poison themselves) with cheap processed foods (Flores, personal communication, August 11, 2011).

The imagery of poisoning oneself also invokes ideas of health as another basic consumer concern. León from Acción Ecológica explained “la presión que existe del consumidor para un producto sano y de calidad es casi nulo, [y] poca o nulo es la presión para acceder al producto directamente del productor” (Personal communication July 28, 2011) showing a perception that in the very least consumers could demand healthy products, and even that kind of organizing is minimal. Ponce from CIALCO echoed the same construction, connecting minimal consumer interest in agro-food politics to health. She said, “El Ecuador no tiene ningún movimiento social del punto de vista de los consumidores, ni del punto de vista de la salud” (Personal communication June 20, 2011). These kinds of statements envision the consumer as simplistic and self-centered: simplistic because they are only motivated by two factors and self-centered because those factors are personal savings and health. This perception cancels all possibility that the average consumer mobilizes any sort of alternative logic in their everyday practices of food purchase.

In addition to visions of consumers as simplistic and self-centered, and despite the perceived weakness of the food sovereignty proposal, most organizations viewed the legal space created by the 2008 Constitution, the LORSA and subsequently the COPISA as noteworthy. Referring specifically to the LORSA, the interviewee from PROBIO called it “una ley única que abre un montón de puertas a los productores y la comercialización alternativa...[la ley es] algo de aplaudir porque siempre ha tocado temas de grandes productores y no de pequeños productores” (Peña, personal communication, July 5, 2011). LaForge from AVSF echoed this sentiment saying that the LORSA “si plantea cambios importantes” (Personal communication June 17, 2011). When asked

about opportunities for greater food sovereignty in Ecuador, the VECO Andino representative responded, “la apertura del Estado, la misma ley de soberanía alimentaria, la búsqueda desde el Estado de nuevos caminos,” and conditioned this opportunity with the difficulties of implementation and the lack of “una política agraria muy clara” (Renckens, personal communication July 26, 2011). Slow Food Ecuador also saw the inclusion of food sovereignty into the State framework as positive; García explained, “en otros países la soberanía alimentaria esta lejísimos de la política, del gobierno, mientras aquí los temas están adentro de la política y el gobierno” (Personal communication, July 14, 2011).

This positive valuation of the space opened by the 2008 Constitution and the LORSA was tempered by disappointment in the government. Ponce at CIALCO commented “la ley tiene potencial pero no es lo que esperábamos... El gobierno si ha puesto cambios interesantes pero no ha sido un gobierno alternativo al nivel que hubiéramos querido” (Personal communication June 20, 2011). Renckens from VECO Andino echoed the same feeling, commenting, “No es tan fácil como hubieramos pensado con este nuevo gobierno progresista” (Personal communication July 26, 2011), as did León from Acción Ecológica. León explained that food sovereignty is only possible with strong support from the State and that this kind of real support does not exist, but “buenas intenciones si [existen]” (Personal communication, July 28, 2011). Gortaire, who spoke on behalf of The Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta and COPISA’s Consumer Commission, commented that the social movements had “expectativas con el gobierno progresista” (Personal communication June 21, 2011), and are only recently beginning to regroup after what has come to be understood as an empty cooptation of their demands (i.e. the use of change oriented discourse and the implementation of

unchanged policies). The topic of cooptation of social movement demands and strong critiques of the Correa administration were present in a number of the interviews.

In addition to these positive and critical valuations of the legal framework around food sovereignty, there was an overarching positive vision of the COPISA as an important space through which civil society can participate in the legal structuring of the agro-food system as well as pressure the government to uphold its commitment to food sovereignty. Representatives from both VECO Andino and AVSF, the two international development organizations, spoke very positively of the COPISA. Renckens from VECO Andino saw the COPISA as an opportunity for the promotion of food sovereignty because it is a space in which members of civil society can “conversar con el Estado, buscando una conversación entre las dos entes” (Personal communication July 26, 2011). And LaForge at AVSF valued the COPISA as the institutionalization of a grassroots, participatory process. He explained, “están llevando acabo otro proceso, en vez de escribir la ley y después socializarla, están recogiendo lo que la gente piensa de los temas antes de escribir la ley” (Personal communication, June 17, 2011). Representatives from other organizations, like CIALCO, took a more cautious approach to the COPISA and saw great possibility but also many challenges, in particular autonomy from the government agenda.

The organization representatives that I interviewed agreed that consumer choice is important to the advancement of food sovereignty and that there is a lack of knowledge about food sovereignty, in general, in the State, and amongst consumers. Despite an understanding of the importance of consumer choices for the promotion of food sovereignty, my interviewees seemed to share a vision of consumers as simplistic and self-centered, solely motivated by personal savings and/or health. Furthermore, there is a positive valuation of the space opened by State inclusion of food sovereignty, the

LORSA and the COPISA. This valuation includes disenchantment with the Correa administration and numerous harsh critiques of cooptation of social movement demands as well as of favoring agro-export and agri-business in practice if not in discourse.

Approaches to the implementation of food sovereignty

Stepping away from organizational perceptions of consumers and food sovereignty in Ecuador, I now turn to the work of the organizations themselves and their approaches to food sovereignty. Looking more directly at the organizations and their work, it is notable that many of them chose to focus on a particular element of the food sovereignty proposal which results in a simplification of the proposal and, in many cases, a reduction of the proposal's language of resistance. To highlight this, I touch on VECO Andino and CIALCO as examples of organizations that approach food sovereignty through value chains and commercialization; on Slow Food Ecuador and RGS as examples of organizations that focus on cultural traditions within the food sovereignty proposal; and the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva as an organization centered on consumer savings.

Referring to a study that her organization conducted,¹⁹ the VECO Andino representative accepted that “el factor más importante [para los consumidores] es la salud, y el acceso más importante es el supermercado” (Renckens, personal communication July 26, 2011). The organization's approach to food sovereignty is centered on value chains and supermarket acquisition so that small farmers can connect to large value chains and grocery stores (Renckens, personal communication July 26, 2011). This position does not critique corporate management of the agro-food sector, a

¹⁹ The results of this study were published in a report entitled “Consumo de productos orgánicos/ agroecológicos en los hogares ecuatorianos” (Andrade Ortiz & Flores, 2008). It is important to keep in mind that this study focused on the consumption of organics, meanings its focus was not consumption practices in general or of the population in general.

critique which is central to the food sovereignty proposal and risks promoting a system in which political action is limited to individual consumer purchasing decisions.

CIALCO focuses on the chains that connect producers and consumers through attention to alternative forms of commercialization. By focusing on circuits of commercialization, and not simply on value chains, CIALCO proposes “una mirada bastante más integrada con el tema productivo, un pensar otro mercado alternativo, una revolución del mercado” (Ponce, personal communication June 20, 2011). CIALCO focuses on commercialization in order to support small farmers by connecting them to alternative markets where they will potentially have more space to negotiate. While CIALCO proposes a revolution of the market, its focus on commercialization represents a simplification of the food sovereignty proposal.

The Red de Guardianes de Semillas and Slow Food Ecuador both approach food sovereignty through cultural traditions. RGS understands the recuperation of ‘ancestral’ culinary and agricultural traditions as important to health. While members are involved in a variety of projects ranging from permaculture, to making traditional jams, and tempeh from *chochos* (lupin), RGS has “un enfoque más basado en salud, porque es la salud que más golpea a la gente en el Ecuador” (Carrera, personal communication, June 23, 2011). Similarly, through eco-gastronomy, SF Ecuador seeks to promote a valorization of local food cultures and their traditions to promote the well-being of local small farmers and the environment. Both RGS and SF Ecuador view their work as committed to many other elements of the food sovereignty proposal, such as valuing the knowledge and work of small farmers, building rural-urban relationships, and promoting sustainable, local production practices, but they simplify the food sovereignty proposal and reduce the language of resistance.

Finally, the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva is a consumer-focused and consumer-run organization that is valued primarily as a household savings mechanism. Theoretical, the canasta model for collective food purchase envisions Canastas as “un esfuerzo de resistencia de los pobladores de la ciudad ante un modelo de economía y de mercado que dificulta el acceso a alimentos” (Gortaire, n.d., p. 3). While the Canasta Ciudad Viva in Quito has experimented with direct purchase, it has proven difficult to maintain, and the Canasta currently simply buys its produce in bulk from the market intermediaries at the *Mercado Mayorista* (the largest open air market in Quito, and the only market that sells in bulk to small distributors). As mentioned, household saving is the major motivation for consumer participation in Canastas according to the literature as well as my own research, which will be presented in the next chapter. While the politicization of food is understood as an intrinsic element of participation in a Canasta over time (Gortaire, representative of COPISA’s Consumer Commission and the Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta, personal communication June 21, 2011), as long as Canasta participation is primarily motivated by savings, it is unlikely to address the complexity of the food sovereignty proposal.

My aim in this discussion is not to discredit the work of any of these organizations in particular, but to show a tendency amongst organizations to focus on one element of the food sovereignty proposal, simplifying the proposal and, in many cases, reducing the language of resistance central to the proposal. The IEE representative summed up this reality in the following comment:

En el país, la propuesta de soberanía alimentaria es una propuesta relativamente débil. Entre las organizaciones está la debilidad de haberla dado una vista light de salud, de ecología, de proteger a la pachamama, de las semillas. No hay tanto entendimiento de sus implicaciones políticas, implicaciones anti-sistémicas (Herrera, personal communication June 24, 2011).

I would not go as far as to say that there is little understanding of the political aspects of the food sovereignty proposal. But my analysis shows that reducing the proposal to a particular element—for example health, seeds, or protection of mother earth—weakens the proposal by giving it “una vista light.” This simplification of the food sovereignty proposal makes sense within the limitations of any one organization’s ability to implement activities, and points to one of the difficulties of the proposal: its complexity. On the other hand, this simplification also results in the marginalization of a comprehensive vision of food sovereignty as a political proposal.

Formal spaces in which these organizations can come together are vital due to the specificity and limitations of each organization’s individual work. Many of the organizations that work on any aspect of the agro-food sector in support of food sovereignty, whether they focus on land reform or product labeling, participate in the Colectivo Agrario and/or the Colectivo Agroecológico. These collectives are important spaces for networking and encounter. Additionally, the Colectivo Agrario was an important actor in the creation of a common agenda amongst indigenous and campesino groups during the Constituent Assembly debates about the inclusion of food sovereignty in the 2008 Constitution (Rosero Garcés, 2008).

As another space of encounter among organizations, the COPISA is particularly valued because it not only brings organizations and members of civil society together but it also facilitates dialogue and debate with the State. This makes the Consumer Commission within COPISA an ideal space for the organizations and individuals who are particularly interested in consumption to meet and strategize.

The first two meetings of the Consumer Commission took place in June and July, 2011 and focused on strategies for involving more consumers in food sovereignty. The content and outcome of these discussions highlight some of the possible problems of

simplifying the proposal to a question of individual health, or to any particular component of the food sovereignty proposal.

The first general meeting of the Consumer Commission was held on June 22, 2011 and focused on defining the role of the Commission for the ten organizations in attendance. This was done by first clarifying the role of COPISA as a “puente entre la sociedad civil y el estado y sus instituciones” (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, June 22, 2011). The Consumer Commission was then framed by the Commission president as

Un espacio de confluencia de todas las organizaciones de consumidores por la soberanía alimentaria para, por una parte, oxigenar el complejo proceso de debate y demanda en torno a la cristalización de políticas de soberanía alimentaria—estancado debido a la tensa relación gobierno-organizaciones campesinas—y por otra parte viabilizar una agenda mínima de los consumidores que permita reconstruir una capacidad de actoría social de los consumidores en el proceso de construcción de un régimen de soberanía alimentaria (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, June 22, 2011).

This image of the Consumer Commission presents a vision of food sovereignty as dependent on the demands and participation of consumers and producers in their relationship to each other. It also makes reference to the tensions between the government and social movements, in this case specifically campesino organizations, which was referenced by other organizations in their discussion of the government’s empty cooptation of movement demands.

During this first meeting, a participatory exercise was used to engage attendees in the identification of roles and objectives for the Consumer Commission. It was made clear that the Commission should have roles that would differentiate it from other spaces of collaboration amongst organizations of consumers, meaning that it should “s[ervir] a [las existentes organizaciones] como una herramienta para procesar demandas y apoyar

sus procesos organizativos” (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, June 22, 2011). The five roles that were accorded in the meeting were:

- 1) Procesar demandas de los consumidores organizados (Articulación sociedad - Estado)
- 2) Productora de espacios de debate y participación a nivel nacional, regional y local
- 3) Generadora de propuestas de Ley, Normativas, Regulaciones y Políticas Públicas en el ámbito del consumo agroalimentario
- 4) Propulsadora de veedurías y control social en torno a las leyes, normativas, regulaciones y políticas relacionadas con la soberanía alimentaria
- 5) Canalizadora de investigaciones científicas e insumos de conocimiento para aportar al potenciamiento del debate sobre soberanía alimentaria y consumo sustentable (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, June 22, 2011).

Present throughout this first meeting was the consensus that among consumers “existe una identificación entre soberanía alimentaria y acceso a alimentos sanos y nutritivos” (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, June 22, 2011). Hand in hand with this understanding that consumers are concerned with personal health, there was an explicit debate around how to engage consumers more broadly in alternative consumption for food sovereignty. Among those present, some were of the opinion that in order to engage the average consumer in food sovereignty oriented consumption the Commission should focus on health because health is an immediate personal interest. This position echoes the perception among organization representative that consumers are simplistic and self-centered in their purchasing decisions. Others present at the Consumer Commission were much more concerned with finding ways to interest consumers in the debates surrounding rural production and livelihoods as a way to build rural-urban ties and promote food sovereignty.

This debate was at the center of the second meeting of the Consumer Commission, held on July 22, 2011. This meeting, attended by five organizations, focused on prioritizing strategies for fulfilling the roles of the Commission decided at the

previous meeting. The top priority was planning a national level event to increase visibility and open debate about consumption and food sovereignty to take place between August and December of 2011.²⁰ Within this time frame the second priority was to design a communication strategy “para la difusión y sensibilización de consumo sustentable y alerta sobre el impacto de patrones y hábitos de consume malsanos” (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, July 22, 2011). It was stressed that the first national event would require “elementos que convoquen, por ejemplo, salud, gastronomía, economía social, o personajes importantes” (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, July 22, 2011). Again, this position demonstrates a vision of consumers as simplistic and self-centered.

During this meeting, health and opposition to genetically modified crops (because of their negative effects on health) were the two topics that were most strongly considered as possible headline issues to involve consumers. Various participants maintained that the “primera demanda [desde los consumidores] debe ser la defensa de la agricultura campesina familiar” (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, July 22, 2011). The conclusion of the Commission meeting was to “usar salud como entrada y lo otro [la defensa de la agricultura campesina familiar] como salida” (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, July 22, 2011). This conclusion was based on an perception that there is “una diferencia entre quien llega si [el enfoque] es protección de la agricultura campesina o si es un enfoque de salud” and that more consumers would be interested in health (Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, July 22, 2011). Similar to the perceptions of the organization representatives that I interviewed, the conclusion of this Commission meeting portrays an understanding of consumers as solely

²⁰ The national level event has been planned for April 18-22 with events in Quito and throughout the provinces. The campaign slogan is !Que rico es! Compañía Nacional por el Consumo Responsable. For more information visit the website at <http://quericoes.wordpress.com/>

motivated by personal savings and health and cancels all possibility that urban consumers mobilize any alternative logics of food consumption.

Again, without discrediting the work of the Consumer Commission, what I would like to highlight here is the simplification of food sovereignty to one of its parts, in this case health. As seen throughout the organizations presented here and in the Commission debates, reducing food sovereignty to one of its numerous elements results in the proposal's simplification. This simplification, in turn can lead to a reduction of the proposal's resistance to market dominance in political and social life. In addition, throughout the organizations and the two Commission debates there was an assumption that the average consumer is simplistic and self-centered, only motivated by personal savings and/or health. As the interviews with Canasta members in the next chapter show, while these motivations are strong among consumers, they are not the only ones.

Chapter 4: Politicizing Food in Quito: the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva

Based on the theoretical, historical, legal and organizational visions of food sovereignty presented in the previous chapters, I now focus on one experience of urban food consumption in order to understand the perceptions and positions of urban consumers within the food sovereignty framework. To begin, I offer a brief introduction to Quito and the alternative food options available to residents, followed by an introduction to the canasta model in Ecuador and the history of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva in Quito. Finally, I highlight the presence of individual interests, particularly savings, as well as alternatives logics of daily food consumption, in interviews with Canasta members and non-members.

ALTERNATIVE FOOD OPTIONS IN QUITO

Stretched out on a north-south axis, Quito is nestled in the Guayllabamba River valley between two branches of the Andean cordillera in north-central Ecuador. The country's capital city, at almost 3,000 meters above sea level, is defined by the pockets and crests of the skirts of Pichincha, the volcano that forms its western limit. Quito's Centro Histórico has been an important center of trade, especially of agricultural goods, since pre-incan times (Tasquer & Peralta, 2006). The city's location in a fertile, agricultural valley, combined with its historical role as a regional center of exchange and communication between the highlands, the coast and the Amazonian lowlands, has historically provided residents with access to a wide range of fruits, vegetables and animal products (Tasquer & Peralta, 2006; Pazos Barrera, 2008).

Since its foundation, Quito has filled in the agricultural spaces of the Guayllabamba Valley. This urban sprawl peaked at the convergence of the 1964 Agrarian Reform and the petroleum boom of the 70s. As Carillo Espinosa (1996) explains, the 1964 Law “no hizo más que acelerar la descomposición del agro y liberar mano de mano de obra que sigue alimentando las zonas ya tugurizadas de la ciudad de Quito” (p. 37). This period of industrialization saw a simultaneous increase in the number of urban mouths to feed and a decrease in available agricultural land in the immediate vicinity. During this time agro-industrial and export-oriented production increased while production for national consumption decreased (p. 7), foreshadowing the changes in food consumption patterns that have become increasingly visible in the last forty years.

As migrants arrived in Quito, they primarily settled in the south of the city. This settlement pattern resulted in marked differences between the southern and northern sectors of the city, as well as differences in the food purchase options available to residents. The north of the city is dotted with posh apartments, shopping centers, and the majority of the city’s financial and administrative infrastructure. The south of the city is marked by less-formal street commerce and more tightly packed urban *barrios* (neighborhoods). The relationship between Quiteños who live in the north and those who live in the south are marked by classic stereotypes. People who live in north Quito portray residents of the south as poor, violent and dependent on remittances. Residents of the north are conversely stereotyped as wealthy and arrogant.

Córdova Montufar (2005) explains that this north-south polarization comes from a planning trend beginning in the early twentieth century that officially designated the north of the city as the space that would be occupied by wealthier social groups, and the south of the city as the space for poorer groups (p. 118). He goes as far as to describe social relations in the two parts of the city as different; according to Córdova Montufar,

residents of the south relate to each other around solidarity and cooperation, while relations in the north are self-centered and shrouded in urban anonymity (p. 87-88). Given these differences and stereotypes, for residents of both the south and the north the other side of the city is largely unknown, and the boundary between the two is infrequently crossed. All of the families interviewed for this research live in south Quito.

The differentiation between the north and the south of the city is also marked by the kinds of alternative food purchase options available to residents. Grocery store chains, like Supermaxi and El Comisariato, as well as less expensive options like Santa María, Akí and Tía are spread throughout the city, as are the handful of open air markets (although there are more open air markets in the south). Other traditional or mainstream purchasing options like neighborhood panaderías, *micro-tiendas* (neighborhood shops), and fruit stalls are also found throughout the neighborhoods of the north and south.

While mainstream food options are available across the north and the south of Quito, the variety and frequency of alternative food purchase options available in north Quito differ from those available in the south. North Quito has a variety of alternative options ranging from *ferias agroecológicas* (farmers markets with an emphasis on organic and ecological products) to cooperatives. The Feria Agroecológica in the Parque Carolina (located in the heart of one of Quito's largest commercial districts) is held the third Sunday of each month. Organization representatives mentioned this feria often as an example of the importance of public space for consumer involvement in food sovereignty. El Elvirita, held on the second Sunday of every month, is another feria located in Tumbaco, one of Quito's most northern suburbs. Additionally, there is a Wednesday market in Cumbayá (a northern suburb between Quito and Tumbaco), as well as numerous home-delivered produce baskets. Zapallo Verde, a cooperative in which members electronically pre-order organic produce and pick it up on Wednesday

afternoons, is another alternative option available to residents of north Quito. While some of these models, for example the produce baskets, resemble the canasta model, they are more atomized in that they do not require interaction among consumers or producers. Additionally, these models tend to be based on producer organizing motivated by a desire to meet the demands of niche consumers rather than on consumer organizing which seeks to build relationships among participating consumers and with producers. As I discuss in the next section, Canastas are an example of consumer-based organizing.

These options, found in north Quito, meet niche market demands for organic, ecological production and are often accompanied by higher prices than mainstream options. Notably, there are no Canastas in north Quito. Inversely, south Quito is peppered with neighborhood Canastas, and no other alternative food purchase options. This geographic division shows that the niche market options are geared to wealthier city inhabitants, who tend to live in the north, while the Canastas target working class families in the south.

CANASTAS COMUNITARIAS IN ECUADOR

Found throughout south Quito, Canastas Comunitarias are a model for community purchase of produce. In his article, “Red de economía para la vida,” Roberto Gortaire (n.d.) defines Canastas Comunitarias as “organización[es] popular[es], autónoma[s], e auto gestionada[s] de consumidores” (p. 1). While each Canasta functions differently, the general model is based on families coming together to buy produce in bulk in order to reduce costs. Additionally, the model seeks to reduce intermediation by purchasing directly from producers. Direct purchase is seen as a potential cost-reducing mechanism, but more importantly as a way to build fraternal urban-rural relationships and to educate consumers about food production. In many cases, as will be discussed in the section on

the Canasta Comuntaria Ciudad Viva, produce is bought in bulk from markets. Produce is then weighed, bagged and distributed to each member family.

Every Canasta is different; and not all Canastas employ the same organizational processes. In many cases they are seen as a social service and in other cases “corresponden a lógicas asistencialistas de instituciones o gobiernos locales” (Gortaire, n.d., p. 3). Despite these differences, and although canasta purchase does not happen on a daily basis, it is an everyday practice not only because the products are everyday food, but because the Canasta, in addition to being a site of food acquisition, is also a symbolic space that has been constructed in a specific historical context.

The first Canasta in Ecuador was started in 1988 in the Barrio La Primera Constituyente in Riobamba, with strong roots in an ecclesiastic base community. This first experience served as an example for the current Canasta Utopia in Riobamaba, which was started with support from the Fundación Utopia in 2000 in response to dollarization (Gortaire, n.d., p. 3). According to a founder of this first Canasta, early on “el impulso fue económico, y poco a poco empezó a tomar otra dimensión” (Gortaire, COPISA Consumer Commission and Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta representative, personal communication, June 21, 2011). The Riobamba canasta experience has become a model for alternative purchase replicated in cities throughout the country.

In theory the Canasta model is supposed to be a working mechanism of both solidary economy and food sovereignty (Aguilar, 2009; Garcés & Kirwan, 2009; Gortaire). Although Canastas pre-date Correa’s first election in 2006, both concepts are present in the discourse of his government, the 2008 Constitution, the LORSA, the PNBV and the Ley Orgánica de Economía Solidaria (2011). While both of these concepts are repeatedly mentioned in relationship with the canasta model, the model has become *the* example of consumer involvement in food sovereignty. Pimbert & Jiggins (2011),

drawing on Sherwood and Kirwan, explain that the canasta model, due to its popularity, “has been chosen as the national representative of consumer interests” (p. 116).

What is so novel about the model, and what arguably has made the canasta experience “the representative of consumer interests,” is that it arose from consumers, and not from producers or from third-party organizations or activists (although they are now quite involved in many Canastas). In addition to being a consumer-based model formulated around solidary economy and food sovereignty, the canasta model is also based on the notion of co-responsibility, which proposes that consumers assume responsibility for the agro-food system through their purchasing decisions as well as through relationships of solidarity with producers and other consumers (Gortaire; Aguilar, 2009; Gortaire, COPISA Consumer Commission and Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta representative, personal communication, June 21, 2012; Rodrigo, Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva member, personal communication, July 26, 2011). Co-responsibility seeks to build “alianzas fraternas” between the city and the countryside, drawing in part on the idea that the canasta model rescues ancestral traditions of food purchase and sharing (Gortaire, COPISA Consumer Commission and Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta representative, personal communication, June 21, 2012; Gortaire, n.d., p. 1-2).

Furthermore, the fame of Canastas as popular organizations for food sovereignty is built around a belief that Canastas are more accessible than other spaces of alternative consumption like the feria in the Parque La Carolina, or the cooperative Zapallo Verde. There is a common perception that Canastas are accessible to the poorest segments of the urban population, which leads to the assumption that participation in Canastas is predominately motivated by savings, and secondarily by the social elements of this participation.

In my analysis of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, I point to findings that complicate these broad perceptions of Canastas Comunitarias. Not only do I show that few Canasta members recall a rural past or past family traditions of group purchase, I also show that member families are middle or lower-middle class. In addition to the general trends cited above, leaders of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva also suggested that much of the membership is elderly, which my interviews support, as well as a perception that participating families come from all over Quito, which my interviews do not support. I highlight these discrepancies between this specific Canasta experience and the general understanding of the model not to discredit the model, but rather to allow for a more rigorous understanding of the Canasta's potential as a site of politicized consumption.

THE CANASTA COMUNITARIA CIUDAD VIVA

The canasta model arrived in Quito in 2002. The history of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva that I recreate here is the combination of two interviews with key organizers of the Canasta: Aguilar was interviewed as the representative of the Canasta and Rodrigo was interviewed as a Canasta member (therefore only his name has been changed). I augment this history with comments from other Canasta members as well as information from other written work about this Canasta.

The canasta model was implemented in Quito by the Comisión de Género y Equidad Social and the Dirección Metropolitana de Desarrollo Humano Sustentable of the Municipio del Distrito Metropolitano de Quito, in response to demands from the Cabildo de Mujeres for greater participation in the development and management of municipally funded projects. Among the original objectives were

establecer y fortalecer la relación directa entre organizaciones de consumidores y productores agrícolas, promover el ahorro familiar... impulsar la solidaridad

comunitaria y la participación comunitaria y contribuir a la seguridad alimentaria de las familias participantes del proyecto” (Yepez Dillon, 2009, p. 54).

The Municipality originally implemented the Canasta project through an agreement with the Tribuna Ecuatoriana de Consumidores y Usuarios (Yepez Dillon, 2009, p. 54; Aguilar, personal communication, July 11, 2011).

According to Aguilar, the Municipality proposed “la idea [de la Canasta] a cinco organizaciones barriales, y solamente [el Barrio] El Carmen cogió la idea” (Personal communication, July 11, 2011). The first Canasta in Quito was started in El Carmen with twenty-five families and offered fifteen products bi-weekly for US\$5.50. Similar to the experience in Riobamba, one member of the base group (the ten to twelve people who prepare the produce for pick up), connected the beginning of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva with the dollarization; she explained that

cuando se dolarizó, ahí vino todo un dólar, un dólar, y para nosotros en ese tiempo un dólar era mucho dinero, eran veinticinco sucres que estábamos acostumbrados a pagar por un atadito de zanahoria, de cebolla. Un dólar se nos hacía muchísima plata...entonces nos organizamos entre veinticinco padres de familia (Lourdes, personal communication, August 6, 2011).

Aguilar explained that at the beginning “el municipio dio recursos económicos a la ONG [la Tribuna Ecuatoriana de Consumidores y Usuarios],... la ONG puso personal, y el barrio asumió el reto y manejo de la Canasta” (Personal communication, July 11, 2011). The relationship with the NGO lasted one year in which participation increased to eighty families. At the end of this first year, members felt that the majority of resources were going to the NGO and not the Canasta, which led them to decide to end the agreement with the Tribuna. Remembering the experience, Aguilar commented, “nos sentimos utilizados, no fue buena esa relación.” Since ending the relationship with the Tribuna de Consumidores, the Canasta has been run entirely by volunteers (Personal communication, July 11, 2011).

In 2004, after radio publicity, the Canasta grew to 600 families. With this level of membership, the Canasta worked to implement a rotational volunteer schedule so that all members would participate in the work of the Canasta and contribute to a sense of corresponsability amongst consumers. This level of participation proved difficult to enforce (Aguilar, personal communication, July 11, 2011).

Due to such popularity, and the difficulty of providing so many canastas, “las 600 familias fueron separándose y armando sus propios grupos, entonces la demanda fue dispersándose” (Aguilar, personal communication, July 11, 2011), and new Canastas appeared throughout other neighborhoods in south Quito. In 2008, the Canasta entered another agreement, this time with the transnational cement corporation, Holcim. Holcim supported the Canasta, along with five other neighborhood projects as part of its social responsibility program, by providing financial support for the regular work of the Canasta as well as for programs to raise consumer awareness (Aguilar, personal communication, July 11, 2011). The agreement with Holcim was followed by a change in neighborhood leadership.

At this time a new board of directors of the neighborhood organization was elected, replacing the board that had been at the head of the neighborhood organization for three decades. The new leadership began to intervene in the Canasta process, which created tension. The key issue of contention seems to have been that the new board did not like the fact that most of the Canasta members were not from El Carmen. Aguilar commented, “la [nueva] directiva venía sin saber nada y querían imponer. Trataron a los voluntarios como empleados. Hubo una fuerte tensión” (Personal communication, July 11, 2011). Rodrigo, another Canasta organizer, echoed her feelings, saying, “esta nueva directiva trajo personas que decían que la Canasta tenía que ser solamente para las familias del barrio. Entonces empezaron a molestar, a fastidiar a las familias que vinieron

de otros barrios, y tuvimos que salir. Decidimos en conjunto salir” (Personal communication, July 26, 2011).

Since this break with the neighborhood organization of El Carmen, it has been difficult for the Canasta to find a permanent and ideal location. Rodrigo shared that after leaving El Carmen, they distributed Canastas at a property that was lent to them; they also distributed Canastas from his house for a short period of time. Finally, they found a more permanent space in the Casa Barrial in the Barrio General Rumiñahui²¹ (Rodrigo, personal communication, July 26, 2011). According to a leader of the neighborhood organization of General Rumiñahui, the Canasta has been using the Casa Barrial to assemble and distribute canastas for about three years. The topic of location and space has made the work of the Canasta difficult. Rodrigo commented, “realmente hemos pensado en varias ocasiones ya cerrar el proceso por el problema del local y el esfuerzo que representa también que las compañeras madrugan [a comprar los productos]” (Rodrigo, personal communication, July 26, 2011).

In addition to the difficulties presented by not having a space, it has proved extremely difficult for the Canasta to build and maintain relationships with producers. Both Aguilar and Rodrigo explained that this has a lot to do with the size and location of Quito. Aguilar illustrated this by highlighting the differences between Quito and Riobamba; she explained that “los alrededores de Riobamba son zonas productivas, los alrededores de Quito no son tan productivos entonces los productos llegan a Quito desde muy lejos” (Personal communication, July 11, 2011). She concluded, “ha sido muy difícil concretar relaciones con los productores, y mucho mas difícil con productores

²¹ See Figure 1 for a map of the location of the Casa Barrial.

agroecológicos y orgánicos. Esto ya es un problema de costo/acceso” (Personal communication, July 11, 2011).

The Canasta has experimented with a variety of forms of purchase and delivery of products from a variety of producers. Due to price fluctuations, harvest inconsistencies, lack of transportation and/or organization on the part of producers none of these mechanisms has lasted. Rodrigo explained that it “es un asunto de confianza... es tan difícil organizar al productor, y tan difícil que haya compromisos, y que haya realmente un cambio mental en el asunto del valor de su trabajo, el valor del producto y la estabilidad” (Personal communication, July 26, 2011).

Currently the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva has a membership of forty-five families and is held on Saturday mornings every two weeks. Two base group members purchase the produce directly at the Mercado Mayorista around 3:00AM. Purchasing this early eliminates intermediaries and lowers costs. They also reduce costs by purchasing lower quality produce (for example smaller papayas or tomatoes). The Canasta rents a truck to haul the purchased produce from the Mayorista (A in Figure 1 below) across the large roundabout (B in Figure 1 below) to the Casa Barrial, the neighborhood community center where the Canasta takes place (C in Figure 1 below). The truck also passes by Rodrigo’s house where the balances, bags and crates are stored.



Figure 1: Map of Mercado Mayorista and Casa Barrial of Barrio General Rumiñahui (Google, 2012)

The base group, consisting of ten to twelve volunteers, arrives at 6:00 AM to weigh and package the produce. Weighing and bagging happens on the patio outside of the Casa Barrial and takes roughly two hours. Around 8:00AM the other families begin to arrive with their empty *costales* (100 pound sacks). If all of the produce has not been weighed and bagged the arriving families chat amongst each other, and often times help with what is left of the work. Distribution does not start until the packaging is complete.

Upon arrival each family pays \$7.50 and is given a ticket stub. The bagged produce is lined up, and each person, with his or her *costal*, goes through the line taking one package of each product. In addition to referring to the organization as the Canasta, the *costales* filled with the fifteen products are also called *canastas*. The ticket stubs are

collected at the end of the distribution line. The money collected is used for purchase the next week.

Once the forty-five canastas have been picked up, the base group divides whatever produce is leftover amongst themselves and each person goes home with an equal share, which they call a *yapa*, a term that is traditionally used to refer to a small token that is given to a customer in appreciation of their purchase. Sometimes there are entire canastas left over, which is difficult for the Canasta because it means less money for the next purchase. Both Saturdays that I participated in the Canasta, there were canastas left over.²² To sell these left over canastas, base group members call friends and family to see if anyone is interested, or they buy the canastas themselves. Many of the base group members take more than one canasta home with them for other members of their families who visit later in the day.

Once all of the canastas are sold and the yapas divided, the base group sweeps the space and leaves the patio of the Casa Barrial as it was. Sometimes a member of the base group who went home early or did not work on that morning will bring a snack to share with those who are cleaning up. One morning when I participated, a past member of the base group who no longer participates in the Canasta brought a hot pot of *moroch*o (a thick beverage of spiced, warmed milk with corn) and bread. Once the clean-up is complete, the rented truck returns and takes the base group members who live closest to their houses with their canastas, as well as returning the balances, bags and crates to Rodrigo's house. This costs US\$5.00. The US\$337.50 (US\$7.50 X 45) that the Canasta makes every week pays for the rental of the truck, as well as the plastic bags for packaging in addition to the produce. There is no profit.

²² The first Saturday, July 23rd, three Canastas were left over. All three were purchased by Rebecca, a previous member who had not participated in three years. The second Saturday fell on a holiday and many member families were out of town. Seven Canastas were left after regular distribution.

Despite the difficulty of building relationships with producers, the canasta model was well received in Quito and Canastas were formed in numerous neighborhoods. Yet, the majority of these Canastas did not last and by the summer of 2011, when I conducted this research, most of the Canastas that had formed during the peak of their popularity no longer existed. The Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva has maintained itself as an autonomous organization of solidary consumers despite the difficulties of location and creating direct ties to producers.

ALTERNATIVE VISIONS OF FOOD IN THE CANASTA COMUNITARIA CIUDAD VIVA

In this section I present the results of the interviews that I conducted with Canasta members and non-members. My results are organized into five principal themes: 1) membership characteristics, 2) economic and social values of the Canasta, 3) appreciation of producers and the *campo* (countryside; rural life), 4) autonomy, dialogue and transparency and 5) knowledge and appreciation of food sovereignty and solidarity economy. With these findings I highlight how this Canasta experience differs from the generalizations associated with the canasta model, and I emphasize evidence of consumer based purchasing logics that go beyond self-centered concerns about savings and health. These logics, I argue, are ultimately what make the Canasta a latent site of politicized consumption.

I conducted thirteen interviews with Canastas members. A couple completed two of these interviews, meaning that thirteen families and fifteen individuals were interviewed. I treated the two interviews in which a couple participated as one interview, excepting the questions of age, education, previous family tradition of group purchase and education level. In total, ten women and five men were interviewed. Seven individuals (six interviews) were part of the base group, and eight individuals (seven

interviews) were not. Eight families had participated in the Canasta for more than five years; five of these eight families mentioned participating since the Canasta was started. Five families had participated for fewer than five years.

One of my thirteen interviews was with Rebecca, who bought three canastas on July 23, 2011 after a three-year hiatus. Since her experience and her interview responses are quite different from the others, her responses will be highlighted. The interview with Rodrigo is also highlighted because as a long-standing Canasta organizer and member of the base group, he offers a distinct vision due to his broad involvement with food sovereignty and solidary economy.

Five interviews were conducted with non-member residents of the Barrio General Rumiñahui. These results are touched upon only briefly in the following discussion. See Appendix B for the interview guides for both sets of interviews (members and non-members).

Membership Characteristics

In general this study shows that age, family size and proximity influence whether or not a family participates in the Canasta. Six of the twelve people who reported age were between forty-five and sixty-four years old; five were older than sixty-five; three did not report age, but two of them were elderly. Only one person was under twenty. This shows that Canasta members do indeed tend to be older, as was indicated by one of the organizers. Furthermore, my interviews suggest that the Canasta may be appealing to older individuals because it allows them to avoid going to the Mercado Mayorista. For four of the eleven people over forty-five, avoiding the market was a benefit of buying a canasta. See Table 2 for age distribution of the interviewed Canasta members.

Age	Number of members
65+	5
45-64	8 (6 reported + 2 elderly who did not report age)
Unknown	1
<20	1

Table 2: Age Distribution of Interviewed Canasta Members

The membership also tends to have larger families. Six of the thirteen households interviewed have at least five members. One non-member household, comprised of one adult and one child, commented that they do not participate because the Canasta is too much food for the two of them suggesting that the quantity of goods discourages the participation of small households.

Additionally, the membership tends to live close to the Casa Barrial where the canastas are distributed. One family lives in San Juan in the center of Quito, but the other twelve families live in the neighborhoods of south Quito. By combining modes of transportation (walking or taking the bus), eleven members can arrive at the Casa Barrial from their homes in twenty minutes or less; six of these eleven arrive in fifteen minutes or less. It takes the family that lives in San Juan almost an hour by bus to get the Casa Barrial, but they usually pick up their canasta from the house of a friend later in the day. It took Rebecca half an hour in a personal vehicle door to door on the day she bought from the Canasta. Although many of the members live very close to the Casa Barrial, only one actually lives in the Barrio General Rumiñahui. This shows that families tend to live close to the Canasta distribution site, which contradicts Rodrigo's claim that people from all over Quito participate in the Canasta.

In addition to the influence of age, family size and proximity, the membership shares other general traits such as middle, or lower-middle class income, little connection to the campo, and mixed purchasing habits. The professions of those interviewed were diverse and included industrial mechanics, salespeople (cosmetics and educational material), taxi drivers, domestic workers, schoolteachers, artisans, accountants, entrepreneurs (*papelería* [paper goods store] and fast food), landlords, and retirees.

It was difficult to calculate household income for numerous reasons, but amongst the twelve households that reported income, incomes ranged from US\$200 to US\$1350 a month. These twelve households reported spending between US\$50 and US\$470 on food per month or roughly between 6.67% and 70% of their income.²³ All of these families pay for all food purchases in cash. Only one family reported using a credit card on occasion and only to pay for large purchases at the grocery store. This information suggests that the families that participate in the Canasta belong to the lower-middle or middle class, and do not represent the poorest segments of Quito's population.

Additionally, the majority of these families did not cite a tradition of group purchase or close ties to the campo. All of the interviewees claimed to have lived in an urban neighborhood before their current residence. Only one person mentioned growing up in the campo before coming to the city. Two other people mentioned childhood memories of the farms of their parents or grandparents. This information shows that most families are not drawing on memories of a recent rural past in their valuation of campesina production and the Canasta. Of the fifteen participants, five mentioned remembering their mothers or grandmothers participating in some form of group

²³ These calculations are based on what families reported when asked how much they spend in each of the places that they cited purchasing food. In some cases these estimates are probably low because families tended to leave out specialty shops, like panaderías and carnicerías. Other estimates are probably high because it is likely that the purchase of household cleaning and personal hygiene items were included in the amounts reported at large grocery stores. Please see Appendix D for more information.

purchase or community distribution of food products, which suggests that for a minority of members, the Canasta might represent a continuation of past traditions.

Finally, I would like to point out the variety of purchase strategies employed by the Canasta members to show that as consumers, the majority of them combine food acquisition options. After I completed the interviews I created a typology of the kinds of places families shop in a month. This typology has six categories: 1) the Mercado Mayorista, 2) other markets (for example: El Camal, Mercado de Chiriyacu, San Roque), 3) neighborhood stores and caseras, 4) Supermaxi, 5) other grocery stores (Akí, Tía, Santa María, and El Comisariato) and 6) mobile vendedores.

Table 3 shows how these categories are combined in the purchasing practices of the families represented here.

Family	Mercado Mayorista	Other markets	Neighborhood stores and caseras	Supermaxi	Other grocery stores	Mobile vendors	Total
1	X	X		X			3
2	X		X			X	3
3	X		X	X	X		4
4	X				X		2
5		X	X	X	X		4
6	X		X				2
7	X				X		2
8	X						1
9	X				X		2
10	X		X				2
11	X		X				2
12	X		X		X		3
13		X		X			2
Total	10	3	7	4	6	1	

Table 3: Combinations of Food Acquisition Options by Canasta Members

Of interest here is not just the majority of families buy food from less than three different places, but the importance of each category. Combining Supermaxi with other

grocery stores, ten families shop at supermarkets. Ten families also shop at neighborhood stores and caseras and other markets showing that grocery stores are only minimally more important than alternate options. Without a doubt, the Mercado Mayorista is the most important food provider, which makes sense because of its proximity. Referring to the neighborhoods that surround the Mayorista, Rodrigo explained “nuestro sector está abastecido [por el Mayorista]” (Personal communication, July 26, 2011).

My interviews suggest that families that participate in the Canasta tend to be older, larger and live closer to the distribution site. These families also tend to be middle or lower-middle class, distanced from a rural past, and they tend to engage in a variety of food purchase options. This sketch of the membership is helpful for thinking through who can participate in a Canasta and who cannot, as well as factors, such as family size and proximity, that influence whether or not a family chooses to participate.

Economic and Social Value of the Canasta

Much of the literature on Canastas Comunitarias argues that the pillars of the canasta model are savings and social relationships. The dual importance of the economic and social factors is also evident in the interviews I conducted. In this section, I intend to show that the economic value of the Canasta is visible not only in the perception of savings as a benefit of participation, but also in the actual size of savings perceived by members. Then I will demonstrate that the social elements of the Canasta are numerous and complex. The importance of relationships to member recruitment as well as the construction of collective memory and the multiple characterizations by members of the social elements of Canasta participation all illustrate the complexity and importance of the social value of the Canasta. By examining the economic and social elements of the

Canasta, I show that they are not two distinct categories, but rather they shape and define each other. The complexity of the Canasta process becomes visible in this intertwining.

As was expected, perception of savings was an important factor for participation and positive valorization of the Canasta. Twelve people cited savings as a benefit of buying a canasta and seven people explained that they would recommend the Canasta to others because of savings. This appreciation of the economic function of the Canasta was more prevalent among members who do not participate in the base group. As will be discussed later, base group members were more likely to stress the importance of the social value of Canasta participation. That said, even members of the base group evaluate their work with the Canasta in terms of its economic value. In response to the question about benefits of participating in the base group, one member responded, “los [beneficios] económicos también, porque nos dan las yapas y antes nos daban la canasta [gratis].”

The significance of savings is also evident in the discrepancy between actual savings and reported savings. Eleven of the thirteen households interviewed cited saving between forty and 200 percent by participating in the Canasta,²⁴ yet the price comparison that I conducted shows much less savings: approximately 15% on purchases made on July, 23, 2011 and 22% on August 6, 2011. For this calculation I personally went to the Mayorista and tried to purchase the same quantity of the same goods included in the Canasta. In many cases, vendors would not sell me amounts that small, but based on the best price and amount offered I calculated an approximate price for the Canasta quantity (See Appendix E for full calculations). If members are in fact overestimating savings, the

²⁴ This comparison is with the price of the same quantities of the same products if bought individually at the Mercado Mayorista.

overestimation expresses how large the economic value of Canasta is perceived to be by members.

However, some members present a different perspective. Adriana, a long-time member, reported feeling like there are no savings with the purchase of the canasta; Rebecca said she found no savings the day that she returned to purchase a canasta. Furthermore, she found the products to be of poor quality, and said she was not considering purchasing from the Canasta again.

In addition to Canasta members' strong appreciation for personal savings, they also share a common understanding of the market. This understanding is expressed through the assertion that prices go down as intermediation is reduced. While present throughout the interviews, this shared market understanding was cited especially in response to the question of whether or not it would be better to buy directly from producers. Six of the interviewed families responded that it would be better to buy directly from producers because there would be less intermediation and therefore prices would be lower. Rodrigo, however, criticized this kind of market logic. While discussing the topic of co-responsability between consumers and producers, he said, "tenemos que jugar con la misma lógica del mercado o hacer una lógica diferente...es necesario trabajar también en ese aspecto." As I show later in this section, despite the dominance of this understanding of the market, other understandings are also present among Canasta members.

In addition to its economic value, members value the Canasta for its strong and complex social elements. These elements are obvious in the importance of relationships for recruiting Canasta members and in the perception of social benefits of participating in the Canasta. Of the thirteen households interviewed, eight found out about the Canasta through some sort of relationship, be it family, friend or neighbor; seven responded that

they currently knew other families that participate in the Canasta and five others reported having known families that no longer participate. This shows that Canasta participants are connected by a wide and disperse network.

The importance of this network of relationships for Canasta recruitment is also visible in the interviews with non-members. All five non-members reported not knowing anyone who participates in the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, despite the fact that they live within a two-block radius of the Casa Barrial. One non-member participates in another Canasta that is farther from her house, but where other members of her extended family also participate. This suggests that relationships may be more important than accessibility in the decision to participate in the Canasta.

Beyond this network of relationships, the perception of social benefits of participation highlights the value of social elements of Canasta membership. In five of the six interviews with members of the base group, when asked about the benefits of participating in the work of the Canasta, they cited the social elements. In two of the seven interviews with non-base group members, the social function of the Canasta was also mentioned as a benefit of participation. Adriana, who perceived no savings, explained that she participates to accompany and please her father who is good friends with Rodrigo. In other words, even without perceiving any savings from Canasta membership, she participates because of the significance of the social element.

In addition to the network of relationships and appreciation for the social elements of Canasta participation, the social value of the Canasta is also evident in the construction of a collective past. Eleven members (all six members of the base group and five of the seven general members) spoke positively about the Canasta's past. They shared fond memories of having visited farms, the past popularity of the Canasta, coffee that was served to the base group in the mornings, the option of purchasing a fresh chicken at

Christmas, of General Assemblies, and the gifting of little bags of hard candies to the elderly. This shared memory represents considerable appreciation for the experiences shared amongst the families over time, and is another element of social value of the Canasta.

In addition to specific memories, the repeated recognition by members that *their* Canasta has lasted over time when many others disappeared contributes to the construction of a collective past. One member commented, “de todas las Canastas que se empezaron, esta es la única que perdura.” As shown here, the social value of the Canasta is not only long-standing in time, but strengthened by its longevity. The construction of collective memory and its implications for the positive valuation and reinforcement of the social elements add complexity to the Canasta.

The social elements of the Canasta are further complicated by the use of two distinct characterizations of the social value by members. Members characterized the social value of the Canasta either as being with others or as helping others. While not present in all interviews with base group members, the characterization of the social value as helping others only appears among base group members. Two of the six members of the base group mentioned the social value of the Canasta only in terms of helping others. Speaking of the benefits of participating in the base group, one member said, “ayudar a la demás gente es lindo.” In response to the same question, another member of the base group responded, “la satisfacción de que todo salga bien para toda la gente.” Two members of the base group characterized the social value of the Canasta only in terms of being with or sharing with others. One person commented, “el proceso [de la Canasta] le ayuda a conocer a más personas, a entrar en un ambiente más de amistad con la gente.” Another member said, “es agradable compartir, estar reunido con todas las compañeras, compañeros.” The other two members of the base group

characterized the social value of the Canasta in both ways, as helping others and as being with others.

In the seven interviews with general members of the Canasta, the two people that mentioned the social value of the Canasta characterized it in terms of being with others. One person explained “se tiene un momento de comunidad ahí [en la Canasta].” The second person shared that “[la Canasta es] una manera de socializar con las personas, que se comparte un tiempo, se conoce a muchas personas.” The characterizations of being with and helping others are interrelated for the members of the base group, while being or sharing with others dominates amongst non-base group members. Most likely this difference is due to different roles within the Canasta. Afterall, base group members through their volunteering are providing a service for general members.

Whether the social value of the Canasta is perceived as being with others or as helping others, it is clear that the social elements of Canasta participation are highly valued. This valuation is more prevalent in the interviews with base group members than amongst general members. One base group member commented, “ya se ha hecho parte de nuestra vida la Canasta, realmente se ha hecho parte de nuestra vida;” another Canasta member, who is not part of the base group, expressed the value of the social element of the Canasta by explaining “me identifico como...parte de un grupo de familias unidas.”

Participation depends on a valuation of the economic and social elements of the Canasta. For some members the social elements may be more valued than the economic, and they will continue to participate even when no savings are perceived, as in the case of Adriana. Or this prioritization could be inverted. What I want to show here is that the economic and social elements of Canasta participation not only interact with each other, but are mutually constituted. This mutual constitution and the valuation of the social

elements of the Canasta as a mechanism of alternative consumption represent consumer motivations that go beyond simplistic, self-centered questions of savings and health.

Appreciation of Producers and the Campo

There was a strong appreciation of the campo and producers in the interviews I conducted. Everyone said it would be better to buy directly from producers than buying from the Mercado Mayorista. As discussed earlier, this appreciation is not based not on a feeling of solidarity with producers, but on a shared understanding of the market that equates less intermediation with lower prices. It is possible that purchasing directly from producers would increase prices instead of reducing them, which points to the problems of the market understanding that Canasta members share. Nevertheless, it is still noteworthy that members share a positive vision of producers and their products and not a negative one.

This appreciation for the campo is also visible in the discussion of health. Two people said that Canasta products are healthy because they come from the campo, showing a positive valorization of the countryside. For Alejandra, a general Canasta member, this valorization is also visible in the preference for products “de un lugar conocido.” In other words, she prefers products that represent a relationship with a specific place, even if it this relationship is only symbolic. Alejandra explained

nosotros cuando compramos para jugo o para legumbres así, es preferencia por algún lugar que uno conoce. Pongamos que hay una señora que vende acá que es de Puellaro, entonces, mi esposo, él es de Patate, de Ambato, entonces el conoce ese producto, o sea, [damos] privilegio a eso.

On the one hand, this appreciation of the campo, producers and their products can be seen as a clear sign of a lack of knowledge about rural production, the real costs of production or the injustices that are committed in chains of intermediation. On the other

hand, this appreciation represents an extremely significant opening towards the campo and the work of campesinos and highlights the existence of consumer purchasing logics that value relationships.

Organizational Autonomy, Dialogue and Transparency

These interviews, as well as the historical trajectory of the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, show that organizational autonomy is an important factor in the Canasta's longevity. The Canasta separated from the Municipality after its first year, and later from the neighborhood organization of in El Carmen in order to maintain its autonomy. Writing about the experience of this Canasta, Aguilar (2009) says,

este proceso que se caracteriza por ser autónomo y voluntario, también dio la oportunidad de ir interpretando lo que es la solidaridad y otros principios, desde la revalorización y puesta en marcha de prácticas culturales y no desde conceptos preelaborados (p. 2).

Autonomy is highlighted in this commitment to a dynamic, not predetermined process.

Canasta members also mention an appreciation for the autonomy of the Canasta, and an understanding that this organizational independence is what has allowed the Canasta to endure in time. In reference to the appearance and subsequent disappearance of Canastas in Quito, one member commented, "empezaron a salir las Canastas, todo eso es al nivel del Municipio, pero la gente más bien en vez de unirse mas al Municipio, la gente se ha ido. El municipio impone demasiado." In this example, it is the Municipality that limits autonomy, but in other cases it could be an NGO, or any other type of organization.

The importance of dialogue and transparency is another recurrent theme in the interviews. One member explained this very clearly, saying "esta Canasta ha podido

mantenerse por el diálogo entre los organizadores y la gente que recibe, porque nadie nos impone nada, todo se hace comentando, conversando, que nos parece, si eso está bien, si eso está mal.” The importance of dialogue and transparency was also expressed through one member’s concern for the wellbeing of the Canasta. She commented, “creo que están distanciándose un poco entre los compañeros que hacen la Canasta porque antes había más comunicación y ahora creo que no hay.”

There is a clear connection between autonomy, dialogue and transparency and the longevity of the Canasta in many of my interviews, yet these processes difficult the day-to-day work of the Canasta. Aguilar explained to me that without outside financial support it is difficult to keep the Canasta running, and even more difficult to engage in activities to raise member awareness of the agro-food system. At the same time, she explained, many Canastas that receive financial support become dependent and close as soon as support ends (Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva representative, personal communication, July 11, 2011). Ultimately, the valuation of organizational autonomy, dialogue and transparency within this specific Canasta process shows that members, as consumers, see themselves as part of a meaningful organizational process.

Knowledge and Appreciation of Food Sovereignty and Solidarity Economy

In order to see if and how members connect their participation in the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva to food sovereignty and solidary economy, the ideological underpinnings of the model, I asked if and where they had heard the terms and if they could provide a definition. Throughout the interviews, the term ‘solidary economy’ and its relationship to the Canasta were better understood than ‘food sovereignty.’ Eleven people reported having heard of solidary economy and seven of them provided

definitions of the term. The two people who had not heard of the term were not members of the base group.

Saving money and working together figured highly in the seven definitions of solidary economy provided. The idea of working together in order to increase the accessibility of food for poorer people was mentioned twice by members of the base group. This highlights that Canasta members are not the poorest residents of Quito, and reiterates the idea of helping others as part of the social value of the Canasta. One base group member said, “[economía solidaria] es algo bueno para la gente más pobre, que ellos también puedan acceder a los productos...o sea nosotros podemos más, y ellos no pueden. Entonces para que todos tengan igualdad por lo menos en alimentación.”

In general, members understood the relationship between the Canasta and solidary economy to be very strong. One person went as far as to say “la Canasta *es* una economía solidaria.” Others saw the relationship in savings, in volunteerism, or in the fact that participation is optional. Of the seven members who offered definitions of the Canasta only two did not use their experience with the Canasta to define the term. One person defined solidary economy as price freezing by the government “para ser solidario con el pueblo.” The other person, the youngest member of the Canasta, said she had learned about solidary economy in high school, and defined it as a utopia in which “[hay] una sociedad en la que todos sean iguales, en la que los productos sean para todos y todo se resuelve entre todos.”

Five people recognized the term food sovereignty and provided a definition. Three of the five were base group members, and two of the definitions that were provided by base group members showed a general understanding of food sovereignty. One base group member defined food sovereignty in this way: “que el pueblo tenga la oportunidad de escoger que alimentarse y [que] lleg[ue] a dar la plata al productor directamente.”

Rodrigo defined food sovereignty in these terms: “que realmente nuestro país recupere sus productos tradicionales, sus procesos de producción, que decida en el asunto de qué producir, de cómo producir, cantidades, que sea autosuficiente.” The third base group member who offered a definition said that food sovereignty was “un título para los alimentos.”

The two definitions of food sovereignty that were provided by general Canasta members were “[es] cuando la gente más necesitada pude acceder a los productos por un costo bueno” and “[es] como una autoridad sobre los alimentos.” While base group members had a better understanding of the term, of the five people who recognized the term only two gave definitions related to the international food sovereignty proposal.

As a final point, I would like to highlight that members connected both terms to the current government. The two general Canasta members, whose definitions of food sovereignty were unrelated to its meaning, reported having heard of food sovereignty in information broadcast by the government. Similarly, of the eleven individuals who recognized the term solidary economy, two cited having heard it in government publicity. Food sovereignty and solidary economy are both important to the canasta model. The connection made by members between these terms and the government explains the idea that “no habían Canastas antes de Correa” which was present in three interviews.

I have shown that familiarity and understanding of food sovereignty and solidary economy among Canasta members is varied. Members’ discussion of these concepts also points to the perceived interconnectedness of the concepts, the Canasta, and the government. These relationships are particularly interesting since the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva was started before Correa’s first election –they show average citizens’ perceptions of government discourse and represent the fruit of the Canasta’s previous work with raising consumer awareness.

Conclusions: Politicizing Food

In this analysis I have highlighted Canasta member perceptions of the Canasta. There are marked differences in the ways that base group members and general Canasta members characterize their positive valuation of the Canasta. Members of the base group understood the social value of the Canasta in terms of helping others in addition to being with others; general members only mentioned being with others. Additionally, base group members were more familiar with the concepts ‘food sovereignty’ and ‘solidary economy’ than general members. More specifically, I have shown that Canasta members perceive social and economic value in their participation in the Canasta. Furthermore, it is clear that the social value of the Canasta is complex and based on many elements including an appreciation of helping others and being with others and the construction of a collective memory. The Canasta’s social and economic values are not simply complementary, they are mutually constituted; and this mutual constitution represents an alternative construction of market and shows that Canasta members actively engage in meaningful alternative consumption.

Through their appreciation of the campo, producers and their produce, Canasta members show that they are motivated not only by savings, but also by ideas of health and symbolic relationships with the origin of their food. By valuing the Canasta’s organizational autonomy as well as its commitment to dialogue and transparency, members show that they feel part of a meaningful organization process, which also contributes to their evaluation of purchase options. Despite the fact that many more Canasta members were familiar with solidary economy than food sovereignty, it is clear that the membership engages with these concepts through their participation. The membership also makes interesting connections between the Canasta, these concepts and the current government.

The tendencies that I have highlighted here show that Canasta members reproduce self-centered purchasing logics that prefer savings and demonstrate little knowledge and solidarity with rural rights and wellbeing. They also show that middle and lower-middle class consumers, as Canasta members, maintain food-purchasing logics that move beyond savings and health. These relational logics are present in the positive valuation of the social elements of the Canasta, as well as relationships with the campo and participation in an organizational process committed to dialogue and transparency. The presence and mobilization of alternative logics of food purchase amongst Canasta members demonstrate cultural and relational visions of food, as called for by Delind (2006). As discussed in Chapter Two, these kinds of visions are a strategy for politicizing food. They highlight the Canasta as a valuable site for the politicization of food and consumption. Furthermore, my findings show that consumers deserve more credit than the organizations discussed in Chapter Three give them. In the following chapter I present my overall conclusions and propose questions for further research.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

I have followed the food sovereignty proposal from its abstract and theoretical bases in Chapter Two to its legal and organizational implementation in Chapter Three. Chapter Four presented food sovereignty as perceived and practiced by consumers who participate in the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, an example of consumer based organizing within the context of food sovereignty.

Chapter Three argued that the inclusion of food sovereignty in the legal apparatus through the 2008 Constitution, the Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria, and the Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir should be considered a meaningful advancement of social movement, particularly indigenous and campesino, demands. Nevertheless, the difficulties encountered in including food sovereignty in the 2008 Constitution, the continued displacement of real structural reform of the agro-food sector as seen by the weakened LORSA, combined with the proliferation of government policies that support the re-concentration of land and the advancement of extractive industries at the expense of the environment and campesino livelihoods, shows how weak State support for food sovereignty really is. This, in turn, highlights the urgency of the re-articulation of social movements around the issues at a time when the movements find themselves weakened not only by cooptation tactics within Correa's government, but also by internal disagreement.

Chapter Three also highlighted the simplification of the food sovereignty proposal as organizations implement programs. This simplification lends itself to a reduction of the language of resistance and/or a depoliticization of the proposal in favor of isolated projects that stress ancestral knowledge and sustainability, for example, but fail to pose

strong resistance to structural inadequacies and injustice. Between a State apparatus that is not only unwilling to fully endorse food sovereignty but that is also involved in deactivating resistance, and social organizations and movements that are struggling to articulate themselves and make demands, the outlook is not optimistic.

That said, in addition to the inclusion of food sovereignty in the Ecuadorian constitutional and legal framework, many other characteristics of the Ecuadorian reality favor food sovereignty. Ponce, the representative from CIALCO mentioned the significance of small producers in the Ecuadorian economy; she said “en el Ecuador, no se ha perdido de todo la producción local, a pequeña escala. Aquí no es un ‘volver’ a otro modelo tanto como es en otros países” (Personal communication, June 20, 2011). Ecuador’s rich history of social movements, as well as the country’s agro-biodiversity, the increasing popularity of green movements, and access to information were other elements mentioned in my interviews that were perceived as favorable to the further promotion of food sovereignty and the articulation of consumers within the food sovereignty framework.

Nevertheless, as long as organizations that work on food sovereignty continue to approach it unilaterally, it is unlikely that the proposal will gain widespread, cohesive support. One of the fault lines around which there is a clear lack of cohesion is consumption. While consumption is present in the theoretical proposal, as well as the 2008 Constitution, the LORSA, the PNBV and in the work of a variety of organizations, the consumer and the urban inhabitant are not considered with the same attention given to production and producers. This makes the work of documenting and complicating the experiences of urban consumers within food sovereignty important.

Beyond brief discussions of “recovering” food traditions, building fraternal ties between the city and the countryside, and/or educating consumers to be thoughtful in

their purchasing patterns, there is a lack of clarity about what consumption in food sovereignty looks like. As a meaningful space in which consumers are motivated by a variety of factors, economic and social, the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva offers suggestions for how to approach consumption and consumers within the food sovereignty framework. Firstly, the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva shows the significance of viewing consumer-based decision making as political action. Secondly, my research suggests that consumers are dynamic and respond to multiple motivations, which leads to my third point: the bases for the politicization of consumption called for by food sovereignty are present in the everyday practices of city dwellers.

As I have shown, the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva represents a meaningful alternative way of “knowing food” by consumers. Therefore, the Canasta should be valued in and of itself (not only in terms of its impact on production) as a space with much potential (Goodman & DuPuis, 2002). Seeing consumer-based decision-making processes as important political actions shows that Canasta members, as they build and value relationships amongst each other, are political actors with potential for further political activism.

It would be easy to discredit the work of the Canasta based on a simple conclusion that it does not meet its most basic goal – buying directly from producers. From this point of view, the Canasta has failed to raise urban consumer consciousness and contribute to the advancement of food sovereignty. If consumer decision making is not viewed as valuable outside of its relationship to production, the Canasta would be a failure because even if it were able to meet its most basic goals, and even if all of the Canastas in the Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta were able to do the same, its impact on production would be minimal.

Viewing consumers as actors in their own right limits the generalizations of this type of conclusion and shows that Canasta members engage in meaningful processes and latent political action in their decisions to continue participating in the Canasta. This vision of Canasta membership offers a much richer understanding of consumption and consumer choice in the food sovereignty proposal.

The organizations interviewed in Chapter Three emphasized the lack of clarity around consumption for food sovereignty, but they also seemed to see consumers as simplistic and self-centered, motivated only by personal savings and questions of health. This suggests a perception not only that consumers do not employ alternative food purchase logics, but also that articulating consumer support for food sovereignty begins at zero and grows only through education and campaigns.

The Consumer Commission of the COPISA reproduced this perception of consumers during the meetings I attended. As I showed in Chapter Three, the variety of approaches to food sovereignty employed by organizations makes shared spaces like the Consumer Commission important, and this Commission is particularly important in its role as a bridge between civil society and the State. The Commission's decision to approach food sovereignty through questions of individual health in order to engage more consumers is worrisome, both because it is a gross simplification of the food sovereignty proposal but also because it discredits any possibility that consumers would or could be interested in other approaches.

Although personal savings was mentioned more often than health, both of these factors undoubtedly motivate consumers who participate in the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, but members also mobilize alternative logics of consumption in their positive valuation of the Canasta. As I discussed in Chapter Four, these alternative purchase logics are present in the social value of the Canasta and the mutually

constitutive relationship between economic and social elements of participation, as well as the positive valuation of the campo and of the Canasta as an organizational process based on autonomy, dialogue and transparency. These perceptions show that consumers, even when they are not buying local and/or organic, are engaged in complex and dynamic decision-making processes. This suggests that consumers are motivated by multiple factors, economic and social, not only personal savings and health. The complexity of the social value assigned to Canasta participation by members provides evidence that consumers are not as simplistic as they are portrayed by the organizations in Chapter Three. Rather, my interviews with Canasta members show that consumers are dynamic and motivated by many factors, ranging from the benefits of personal savings to feelings of belonging and a preference for maintaining symbolic relationships with the origin of their food.

As organizations and social movements continue to build a cohesive movement for food sovereignty, they must consider the consumer as a dynamic political actor with alternative purchasing logics already at her disposal. Identifying the logics that consumers maintain in their everyday purchasing habits, like the Canasta, must form the base of any larger movement around consumption. To lose sight of these logics or to replace them with discourses of conscious consumption that focus on individual choice would be to lose sight of the politicization of consumption advanced by the food sovereignty proposal.

Drawing on the discussion of consumption presented in Chapter Two, consumption within the food sovereignty must avoid consumerist politics, which submit politics to the market thereby limiting political options and erasing the possibility of rethinking market structure and values, and find mechanisms for the politicization of consumption. I would argue that one such mechanism is the deployment of social

approaches to food and consumption such as those present among Canasta members. Even when these purchasing logics are not posed as radical politics, they open a space for politicizing consumption and the agro-food system.

I want to be careful not to overstate the Canasta space as a politicized space of consumption. After all, even though I consider the Canasta a valuable consumer-based space that values the social elements of food and consumption, it would be hard to argue that it is a strong example of food sovereignty. I mention this because making Canastas the emblem of consumer involvement in food sovereignty, when many of them simply cannot maintain direct purchase, much less the kinds of activities necessary for deeper consumer involvement in agro-food politics, hides the difficulties and contractions of the agro-food sector. Covering these issues makes them harder to address. While the Canasta may not be a prime example of consumer involvement in food sovereignty, I maintain that as a valuable consumer-based space of alternative consumption, the Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva has the potential to become a mechanism for involving urban consumers in the issues surrounding food sovereignty.

The tendencies that I have presented here, at the legal, organizational and individual consumer levels, point to many questions for further research. The Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva is one Canasta among many in Ecuador. What can other Canastas learn from this particular canasta experience? How can Canastas work to maintain the multiplicity of factors that inform the daily practice of Canasta participation among members? More broadly, this research points to the importance of future research on the variety of alternative food consumption mechanisms in Quito, and in Ecuador more generally, with special attention to the ways in which these mechanisms engage in a politicization of food or contribute to a surrendering of politics to the market.

Additionally, further research must seek to document and strengthen the relational logics maintained by consumers in their daily practices more broadly.

Food sovereignty as a political proposal for structural change, a reimagining of society and an alternative modernity, encapsulates many proposals and stresses their interrelatedness. Proponents of food sovereignty call for the politicization and subsequent restructuring of the agro-food system. This politicization seeks to create an environment of ongoing tension in which decisions are made by widespread participation and debate, based on rights and solidarity. Much of the food sovereignty proposal values the everyday practices of small-scale campesinos as the path to a more just agro-food system. However, I have shown that consumers also engage in everyday practices that can support food sovereignty, and that these practices must be valued and supported. These everyday practices range from member valuation of the social elements of Canasta participation to the unspoken commitment between my Tia Esthelita and the neighborhood panadería.

Appendix A: Acronyms

AP	Alianza País, Acuerdo País
AVSF	Agrónomos y Veterinarios Sin Fronteras
CIALCO	Circuitos Alternativos de Comercialización
CLOC	Coordinación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones Campesinas
CNC-Eloy Alfaro	Coordinadora Nacional Campesina Eloy Alfaro
CONAIE	Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador
CONFESUNASSC-CNC	Confederación Unitaria de Organizaciones Campesinas Afiliadas al Seguro Social Campesino- Coordinadora Nacional Campesina
COPISA	Conferencia Plurinacional e Intercultural de Soberanía Alimentaria
ECUARUNARI	Confederación de los Pueblos de Nacionalidad Kichua del Ecuador
FENACLE	Federación Nacional de Trabajadores Agroindustriales, Campesinos e Indígenas Libres del Ecuador
FENOCIN	Confederación de Organizaciones Campesinas, Indígenas y Negras del Ecuador
IEE	Instituto de Estudios Ecuatorianos
LORSA	Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria
MAGAP	Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería, Acuacultura y Pesca
MCDS	Ministerio de Coordinación del Desarrollo Social
MIES	Ministerio de Inclusión y Economía Social
PNBV	Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir 2009-2013
RGS	Red de Guardianes de Semillas
SENPLADES	Secretaría Nacional de Planificación y Desarrollo
SISAN	Sistema de Soberanía Alimentaria y Nutricional
WTO	World Trade Organization

Appendix B: Interview Guides

Semi-structured Interview Guide for Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva Members

Participación en la canasta:

1. Tiempo de participacion?
2. Cómo llegó a saber de la canasta?
3. Transportacion? Cuando tiempo demora?
4. Con quién va a retirar la canasta?
5. Participa o ha participado en la compra y distribución de los productos?
6. (Miembros de grupo base) Beneficios de participar en trabajo de la canasta? Dificultades?
7. (Todos) Beneficios de retirar la canasta? Desventajas?
8. Conoce a otras familias que participan?
9. Recomendación
10. Tradicion familiar de compra en conjunta?
11. Es saludable?
12. Mejoras?
13. Cuánto ahorra con la compra de la canasta?
14. Soberanía alimentaria: conoce el concepto? De donde? Definición? Relación con la canasta?
15. Economía solidaria: conoce el concepto? De donde? Definición? Relación con la canasta?

Información de la familia:

1. Edad
2. Nivel de educación
3. En cuál sector vive? Hace cuánto tiempo? Donde vivía antes?
4. Cuantos viven en la casa?
5. En una quincena dónde más hace compras?
6. Cuánto gasta en compras por quincena?
7. Fuentes principales de ingreso en su hogar?
8. Ingresos al hogar?

Semi-structured Interview Guide for Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva Non-members

Acerca de la canasta

1. Conoce la Canasta Familiar Vida? Qué conoce?
2. Participación en otra canasta?
3. Por qué no participa?
4. Otras familias que participan?
5. Tradición familiar de compra en conjunta?
6. Que tendría que ofrecer la canasta para que usted participe?

Información de la familia:

1. Edad
2. Nivel de educación
3. En cuál sector vive? Hace cuánto tiempo? Donde vivía antes?
4. Cuantos viven en la casa?
5. En una quincena dónde hace compras usted?
6. Cuánto gasta en compras por quincena?
7. Fuentes principales de ingreso en su hogar?
8. Ingresos al hogar?

Semi-structured Interview Guide for Organizations

1. Cuál es el trabajo de la organización (general, con soberanía alimentaria, con consumo)?
2. Cuál es el aporte más importante de la organización a la conversación de soberanía alimentaria en el país?
3. Cuáles son los desafíos más grandes al trabajo de la organización?
4. Participación en la redacción de la LORSA?
5. Participación en los espacios compartidos (Colectivo Agrario, Colectivo Agroecológico, COPISA)?
6. Cuáles son las oportunidades y desafíos de la coyuntura actual ecuatoriana para el fortalecimiento de soberanía alimentaria?

Appendix C: Interview List

1. Michel LaForge, Representative AVSF, June 17, 2011
2. Ceclia Ponce, Representative CIALCO, June 20, 2011
3. Roberto Gortaire, Representative Red Nacional Mar, Tierra, Canasta and Consumer Commission of the COPISA, June 21, 2011
4. Xavier Carrera, Representative RGS, June 23, 2011
5. Stalin Herrera, Representative IEE, June 24, 2011
6. Daisy Peña, Representative PROBIO, July 5, 2011
7. Katiuska Aguilar, Representative Canasta Comunitaria Ciudad Viva, July 11, 2011
8. Claudia García, Representative Slow Food Ecuador, July 14, 2011
9. Johanna Renckens, Representative VECO Andino, July 26, 2011
10. Xavier León, Representative Acción Ecológica, July 28, 2011
11. Biby Flores, Representative CLOC, August 11, 2011
12. Canasta Member Interviews (13), July 27, 2011—August 6, 2011
13. Canasta Non-member Interviews (5), August 4, 2011

Appendix D: Canasta Members' Reported Household Earnings and Food Expenses

Household	Earnings/month (US\$)	Non Canasta Food Expenses/month (US\$)	% Earnings spent on food/month
1	500-600	100	16.67-20
2	290-300	160	53.33-55.17
3	260	180-260	69-100
4	700+	200	28
5	260	80	32-36.36
6	1200	80-90	6.67-7.5
7	1250-1350	280	20.74-22.40
8	200 (approx.)	50	25
9	460	80	17.39
10	264	210	79.39
11	300	70-80	26.67-23.34
12	N/A	N/A	N/A
13	450-500	156-166	31.2-36.89

Appendix E: Calculations of Savings

July 23, 2011

Produce	Quantity in the Canasta	Price at Mercado Mayorista	Calculation of cost (US\$)
Carrot	1.5 lbs.	.50/2 lbs.	0.38
Green Pepper	1 lb.	.50/6 large peppers	0.50
Potato	8 lbs.	\$4/25 lbs. (not sold in smaller quantities)	1.28
Orange	10	\$2/25	0.80
Yellow Onion	1 bunch	0.50/bunch	0.50
Purple Onion	1.5 lbs.	0.50/1.5 lbs.	0.50
Passion Fruit	5	\$1/11-13	0.42
Green Plantain	5	\$1/10	0.50
Tomato	1.5 lbs.	0.60/1.5 lbs.	0.60
Cauliflour	1 head	0.50/head	0.50
Mortino (fruit)	1 lb.	\$1/1.5 lb.	0.67
Turnip	1 bunch	0.50/ bunch	0.50
Papaya	2 medium	\$6/box (26)	0.46
Radish	1 bunch	0.50/bunch	0.50
Pepino (fruit)	3	\$1/5	0.60
Total cost (purchased individually):			\$8.61
Savings:			\$1.11 (8.61-7.50)
% Savings:			15% (14.8%)

August 6, 2011

Produce	Quantity in the Canasta	Market price	Calculation of cost (US\$)
Carrot	2 lbs.	.50/2 lbs.	0.50
Green Pepper	1.5 lbs.	.50/6 large peppers	0.50
Potato	8 lbs.	\$4/25 lbs. (not sold in smaller quantities)	1.28
Orange	10	\$2/25	0.80
Yellow Onion	1 bunch	0.5/bunch	0.50
Purple Onion	1.3 lbs.	0.5/1.5 lbs.	0.43
Passion Fruit	5	\$1/11-13	0.42
Green Plantain	5	\$1/10	0.50
Tomato	1.5 lbs.	0.60/1.5 lbs.	0.60
Broccoli	1 head	0.60/head	0.60
Squash	Quarter	0.50/quarter	0.50
Pineapple	1	0.75/pineapple	0.75
Beets	1.5 lbs.	.50/ 1 lb.	0.75
Fava bean (with pods)	1.8 lbs.	\$1/ 2 lbs. (without pods)	0.50
Yuca	2 lbs.	0.5/2 lbs.	0.50
Total cost (purchased individually):			\$9.13
Savings:			\$1.63 (9.13-7.50)
% Savings:			22% (21.73%)

References

- Acosta, Alberto. (2008). *Bitácora Constituyente*. Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala
- Acosta, Alberto. (2009a, May 5). Ecuador: Sobre la ley de soberanía alimentaria. *Rebelión*. Retrieved April 15, 2012, from <http://www.rebelion.org/noticia.php?id=84851>
- Acosta, Alberto. (2009b, February 17). El buen vivir, una oportunidad por construir. *Portal de Economía Solidaria*. Retrieved April 16, 2012, from http://www.economiasolidaria.org/documentos/el_buen_vivir_una_oportunidad_por_construir
- Acosta, A. & Martínez, E. (Eds.). (2009). *El bien vivir. Una vía para el desarrollo*. Santiago, Chile: Editorial Universidad Bolivariana.
- Aguilar, Katiuska. (2009). *Canasta Solidaria "El Carmen."* Quito, Ecuador: Congreso Internacional La ciudad viva como URBS. Retrieved April 13, 2012 from http://www.laciudadviva.org/export/sites/laciudadviva/04_experiencias/Ecuador/la_canasta/0284_Ecuador_Canasta_Solidaria.pdf
- Andrade Ortiz, D. & Flores, M. (2008). *Consumo de productos orgánicos-agroecológicos en los hogares ecuatorianos*. Quito: El Chasqui Ediciones.
- Becker, Marc. (2011). Correa, Indigenous Movements, and the Writing of a New Constitution in Ecuador. *Latin American Perspectives* 176 (38), 46-62.
- Bretón solo de Zaldívar, Víctor. (1997). *Capitalismo Reforma Agraria y organización communal en los Andes: Una introducción al caso ecuatoriano*. Lleida, Spain: Adreça Científica.
- Bretón solo de Zaldívar, Víctor. (2004). Las organizaciones no gubernamentales y la privatización del desarrollo rural en América Latina. In Oscar Calavia, J. C. G. & Rodríguez, M. E. (Eds.), *Neoliberalismo, ONGs y pueblos indígenas en América Latina* (pp. 53-80). Madrid: SEPHA.
- Bretón solo de Zaldívar, Víctor. (2009a). La deriva identitaria del movimiento indígena

- en los Andes ecuatorianos y los límites de la etnofagia. In Martínez, C. (Ed.), *Repensando los mocimemos indígenas* (pp. 69-121). Quito: FLACSO Ecuador.
- Bretón solo de Zalvídar, Víctor. (2009b). ¿Continuarán uriendo de hambre millones de personas en el siglo XXI? *Revista Española de estudios Agrosociales y Perqueros* 224, 69-109.
- Carrasco, Haydee, & Sergio Tejada. (2008). Soberanía Alimentaria: La libertad de elegir para asegurar nuestra alimentación. Lima: Soluciones Prácticas – ITDG.
- Carrillo Espinosa, María Cristina. (1996). *El sabor de la tradición: escenarios y actores de la cocina tradicional en el Centro Histórico de Quito*. Quito: Ediciones UPS, Ediciones Abya-Yala.
- Clark, K. & Becker, M. (Eds.). (2007). *Highland Indians and the State in Modern Ecuador*. Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press.
- CODENPE. (2011). *Serie: Diálogo de Saberes, Módulo 2: Plurinacionalidad*. Quito, Ecuador: Consejo de Desarrollo de la Nacionalidades y Pueblos del Ecuador. Retrieved April 16, 2011, from <http://xa.yimg.com/kq/groups/17809804/1898974194/name/Modulo+de+Plurinacionalidad.pdf>
- Conaghan, Catherine M. (2007a). The 2006 presidential and congressional elections in Ecuador. *Electoral Studies*, 26 (4), 823-828.
- Conaghan, Catherine M. (2007b) "Ecuador's Gamble: Can Correa Govern?" *Current History*. 106, no. 697 (February 2007): 77-82.
- Conaghan, C. M. & de la Torre, Carlos. (2008). The Permanent Campaign of Rafael Correa: Making Ecuador's Plebiscitary Presidency. *Press/Politics*, 13(3), 267-284.
- Córdova Montufar, Marco. (2005). *Quito: Imagen Urbana, Espacio Público, Memoria e Identidad*. Quito: Ediciones TRAMA.
- Correa asume Presidencia tras insultante discurso en Zumbahua. (2007, January 15).

- Ecuadorinmediato.com*. Retrieved on April 15, 2012 from http://www.ecuatorinmediato.com/Noticias/news_user_view/ecuatorinmediato_noticias--47175
- Dávalos, Pablo. (2002). Movimiento indígena ecuatoriano: Construcción política y epistémica. In D. Mato (Ed.), *Estudios y Otras Prácticas Intelectuales Latinoamericanas en Cultura y Poder* (pp. 89-97). Caracas: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO) y CEAp, FACES, Universidad Central de Venezuela.
- Delind, Laura B. (2006). Of Bodies, Place and Culture: Re-Situating Local Food. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 19, 121-146.
- Desmaris, Annette Aurélie. (2007). *Globalization and the Power of Peasants: La Vía Campesina*. Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press.
- Dillon Yopez, A. E. (2009). *Capital social: en busca del fortalecimiento de organizaciones económicas, caso camunitaria de la administración municipal Zona Centro, Quito-Ecuador* (Masters thesis). Available from FLACSO Andes.
- Ecuador 2008 Constitution, Arts. 13, 281, 282, 288, and Disposiciones transitorias.
- FAOlex. (No date). *Ecuador: Ley Orgánica Reformatoria a la Ley Orgánica de Régimen de la Soberanía Agroalimentaria*. Retrieved April 16, 2012 from http://faolex.fao.org/cgi-bin/faolex.exe?rec_id=083530&database=faolex&search_type=link&table=result&lang=spa&format_name=@SRALL
- Garcés, S. & Kirwan, E. (2009). Las canastas comunitarias en Ecuador: una apuesta por la salud, la economía y la solidaridad. *Letras Verdes* (5), 9-11.
- Goodman D., & DuPuis, M. (2002). Knowing Food and Growing Food: Beyond the Production-Consumption Debate in the Sociology of Agriculture. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 42 (1), 5-22.
- Gargarella, Roberto. (2008, October 13). Cambiar la letra, cambiar el mundo. *El País*. Retrieved April 15, 2012, from http://elpais.com/diario/2008/10/13/opinion/1223848811_850215.html

- Georgetown University, Political Database of the Americas. (2009). *Electoral Results*. Retrieved April 15, 2012, from <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Elecdata/Ecuador/pres09.html>
- Goodman, M. K., Maye, D., & Holloway, L. (2010). Guest Editorial. Ethical foodscapes?: premises, promises and possibilities. *Environment and Planning*, 42, 1782-1796.
- Google Maps. (2012). [Quito, Pichincha, Ecuador] [Street map]. Retrieved from <http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&tab=wl>
- Gortaire, Roberto. (Unkown). *Sistemas de canasta comunitaria ¿Organizaciones de consumer agroecológico?* Retrieved on April 13, 2012 from http://www.tau.org.ar/upload/89f0c2b656ca02ff45ef61a4f2e5bf24/Red_de_econom_a_para_la_vida.pdf
- Guntham, Julie. (2012). "If They Only Knew": Color Blindness and Universalism in California Alternative Food Institutions. In P. Williams-Forson & C. Counihan (Eds.), *Taking Food Public: Redefining Foodways in a Changing World* (pp. 211-222). New York: Routledge.
- Jones, A., Pimbert, M., & Jiggins J. (2011). Canastas Comunitarias: challenging modern food in Ecuador. In *Virtuous Circles: Values, Systems, Sustainability*. London: IIED and IUCN CEESP.
- Jokisch, Brad. (2007). Ecuador: Diversidad en Migración. *Migration Information Source: Fresh Thought, Authoritative Data, Global Research*. Retrieved April 15, 2012, from <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=591>
- Latouche, Serge. (2007). La impostura desarrollista. In *Sobrevivir al desarrollo: De la descolonización del imaginario económico a la construcción de una sociedad alternativa* (pp. 53-63). Barcelona: Icaria.
- Lavin, Chad. (2012). The Year of Eating Politically. In P. Williams-Forson & C. Counihan (Eds.), *Taking Food Public: Redefining Foodways in a Changing World* (pp. 576-591). New York: Routledge.
- Leff, Enrique. (2005, November). Complejidad, Racionalidad Ambiental y Diálogo de

- Saberes. Presented at the *I Congreso internacional interdisciplinar de participación, animación e intervención socioeducativa*, Barcelona, Spain.
Retrieved April 16, 2011, from
http://www.nova.edu/library/dils/teachinghandouts/apa/APA_6th_ed.pdf
- León Trujillo, Jorge. (2010). Las organizaciones indígenas y el gobierno de Rafael Correa. *Iconos* 37, 13-23.
- Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria. Asamblea Nacional (2010).
- Little, R., Maye, D. & Ibery, B. (2010). Collective Purchase: Moving Local and Organic Foods Beyond the Niche Market. Paper submitted for Goodman, M., Mayye, d. & Holloway, L (2010). Ethical Foodscapes? Premises, Promises and Possibilities, *Environment and Planning*. Retrieved April 16, 2011 from
www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c4/98/59/LittleetalFinal.pdf
- López, A. A., & Cubillos Celis, P. (2009). Análisis del Referéndum Constitucional 2008 en Ecuador. *Iconos*, (33), 13-20.
- Markowitz, Lisa. (2012). Expanding Access and Alternatives: Building Farmers' Markets in Low-Income Communities. In P. Williams-Forson & C. Counihan (Eds.), *Taking Food Public: Redefining Foodways in a Changing World* (pp. 531-541). New York: Routledge.
- McMichael, Philip. (2005). Global Development and the Corporate Food Regime. *Rural Sociology and Development*, 11, 269-303.
- McMichael, Philip. (2009). Food Sovereignty, Social Reproduction and the Agrarian Question. In A. H. Akram-Lodhi & C. Kay (Eds.), *Peasants and Globalization: Political economy, rural transformation and the agrarian question* (pp. 288-312). New York: Routledge.
- Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, June 21, 2011.
- Meeting minutes, COPISA Consumer Commission, July 21, 2011.
- Pallares, Amalia. (2002). *From Peasant Struggles to Indian Resistance: The Ecuadorian Andes in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

- Patel Raj. (2005). International Agrarian Restructuring and the Practical Ethics of Peasant Movement Solidarity. *Centre for Civil Society Research*, 35 (2), 1-42.
http://ccs.ukzn.ac.za/files/CCS_RREPORTS2_REPORT35.pdf
- Patel, Raj. (2007). Transgressing Rights: La Vía Campesina's call for food sovereignty. *Feminist Economics*, 13:1, 87-101.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13545700601086838>
- Pazos Barrera, Julio. (2008). *El sabor de la memoria: historia de la cocina quiteña*. Quito: Fondo de Salvamento del Patrimonio Cultural de Quito (FONSAL).
- Paz y Miño Cepeda, Juan J. (Unknown). La Asamblea Constituyente de 2007: Un Nuevo Ciclo Histórico en Ecuador. *Asamblea Constituyente*. Retrieved April 15, 2012, from http://www.asambleaconstituyente.gov.ec/documentos/biblioteca/ciclo_historico.pdf
- Peralta, Jose. (2008, 29 June). La Asamblea Constituyente cumple hoy 7 meses de trabajo. *Ciudad Alfaro Boletín 1313*. Retrieved April 16, 2012, from http://constituyente.asambleanacional.gob.ec/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14088
- Plan Estratégico 2009-2012*. (2009). Quito: COPISA. Retrieved April 16, 2012, from http://www.soberaniaalimentaria.gob.ec/pacha/?page_id=289
- Reguillo, Rossana. (Unknown). La clandestina centralidad de la vida cotidiana. *Quintapata Revista de Artes Visuales 1*, 1-13.
- Rosero Garcés, Fernando. (2008). *La Asamblea Nacional Constituyente: tensiones entre la utopía deseada y el cambio posible, elaboración del texto consitucional sobre soberanía alimentaria*. Institute for Research and Debate on Governance. Retrieved April 15, 2012, from <http://www.institut-gouvernance.org/en/analyse/fiche-analyse-448.html>
- Sage, Colin. (2012). *Environment and Food*. New York: Routledge.
- Tasquer, R.M., & Peralta, Evelia. (2006). *Quito*. Quito: Ediciones TRAMA.
- Van Cott, Donna Lee. (2002). Constitutional Reform in the Andes: Redefining Indigenous-State Relations. In R. Seider (Ed.), *Multiculturalism in Latin America:*

- Indigenous Rights, Diversity and Democracy* (pp. 45-73). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vía Campesina. 1996. *Food Sovereignty: A Future without Hunger*. Retrieved April 13, 2012 from <http://www.voiceoftheturtle.org/library/1996%20Declaration%20of%20Food%20Sovereignty.pdf>
- Vía Campesina. (2000). *Bangalore Declaration of the Vía Campesina*. Retrieved April 13, 2012, from http://Viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=440:bangalore-declaration-of-the-via-campesina&catid=33:3-bangalore-2000&Itemid=55
- Vía Campesina. (2001a). *Final Declaration of the World Forum on Food Sovereignty. September 3-7 2001 Havana Cuba*. Retrieved April 13, 2012 from <http://www.fao.org/righttofood/KC/downloads/vl/docs/AH290.pdf>
- Vía Campesina. (2001b). *Our World Is Not For Sale: Priority to Peoples' Food Sovereignty, WTO Out of Food and Agriculture*. Retrieved April 13, 2012 from <http://www.citizen.org/documents/wtooutoffood.pdf>
- Vía Campesina. (2006). *United in the Vía Campesina*. Retrieved April 13, 2012, from http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=251:united-in-the-vcampesina&catid=33:3-bangalore-2000&Itemid=55
- Vía Campesina. (2011a). *?Quién Somos? La voz de las campesinas y los campesinos del mundo*. Retrieved April 13, 2012, from http://viacampesina.org/sp/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=27&Itemid=44
- Vía Campesina. (2011b). *"Our struggle is for the permanence of Agriculture": Interview with Alberto Gomez of La Vía Campesina, Durban South Africa*, from http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1195:our-struggle-is-for-the-permanence-of-agriculture-interview-with-alberto-

gomez-of-la-via-campesina-durban-south-africa&catid=48:-climate-change-and-agrofuels&Itemid=75

Yashar, Deborah J. (2005). *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America: The Rise of Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zapatta, Alex. (2007). Del triunfo de la “Gloriosa” a la derrota del proceso de reforma agraria: 50 años de políticas agrarias en el Ecuador. In Vaillant, M., Cepeda, D., Gondard, P., Zapatta, A. & Meunier, A. (Eds.), *Mosaico agrario: Diversidades y antagonismos socio-económicos en el campo ecuatoriano* (pp. 55-63). Quito: SIPAE, IRD, IFAE.